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What is the Church of
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WHAT IS

THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST?

JOHN D. TOY, PRINTER,
CORNER OF MARKET AND ST. PAUL-STS.
BALTIMORE.

WHAT IS

THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST?

By George Hill.

"Sirs, ye are brethren."—Acts vii. 26.

BALTIMORE:
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A PASTORAL LETTER

TO THE

People of the Diocese of Maryland.

Dear Brethren:

Our blessed Lord declares it to have been the end of His birth and coming into the world that He should bear witness unto *the truth*.[1] It is through *the truth*, He affirms in His solemn communings with the Father, that they whom He sends into the world are sanctified.[2] To speak *the truth* in love, is the mode of growing up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ.[3]

Now *the truth* is unchangeable and indivisi-

[1] John xviii. 37.
[2] John xvii. 17—19.
[3] Eph. iv. 15.

ble. "*All* things whatsoever JESUS had commanded them," the apostles were to "teach" men "to observe;"[1] and by so teaching them, they brought them to "the acknowledging of *the truth* which is after godliness."[2] As Christians we are bound equally to all the truth, in faith and practice, and to every part. It is no privilege of ours to select what we deem important, and lay the rest aside. We have not THE *truth*, if we are destitute of any portion of it. If our destitution is the result of our own choice, we are guilty of the rejection of *the whole*. It came from heaven entire. It was sent into the world, by its commissioned bearers, entire. It must be acknowledged and held in that same entireness.

We dare not, therefore, dear brethren, assent to those who distinguish between preaching *the Church* and preaching CHRIST. It is undeniable that our LORD Himself "commanded"[3] reference to "the Church."[4] It was certainly

[1] Matt. xxviii. 20.
[2] Titus i. 1.
[3] See Matt. xxviii. 20.
[4] Matt. xviii. 17.

one of the "things" His apostles were sent to "teach men to observe." How they *did* teach men on the subject, the whole inspired Epistle to the Ephesians shows. Surely no man can read that Epistle through, and doubt whether its holy writer considered the mode in which men are gathered together in CHRIST,[1] and the nature of their union in Him, as fundamental parts of the truth as it is in JESUS.[2] "The Church" he declares to be that for which CHRIST "gave Himself."[3] Who that believes in the efficacy of that most precious Gift, but must desire to know *what* it purchased? And how much more, when taught that, so purchased, it is presented unto Himself,[4] to be "His body, the fulness of Him who filleth all in all!" Is the nature of that which is *so* spoken of, among the lesser things, which may be safely laid aside, while weightier matters of close personal interest engross the attention? My brethren! if there be a question of all-en-

[1] Eph. i. 10.
[2] Eph. iv. 21.
[3] Eph. v. 25.
[4] Eph. i. 23.

grossing moment to each one of us in particular, it is Whether he be a living member of the Body of his Redeemer, "of His flesh, and of His bones."[1] For has not He told us, that except we abide in Him, as living branches of the true Vine, we must be cast forth unto the burning?[2] Whether we be branches of the Vine; whether, being so, we abide in Him, bearing fruit; are surely vital questions to those who expect to live through His Name!

Observe, I beg you, that this question affects the evidence and warrant of our hope, not the kind and degree of the hope itself. IN CHRIST ALONE is our hope.[3] But *how* are we assured that we are "*in* Him?"[4] The NAME OF CHRIST ALONE is our salvation.[5] But what is our warrant to take shelter in that Name?[6] and

[1] Eph. v. 30.
[2] John xv. 1—6.
[3] 1 Cor. xv. 19. 2 Cor. v. 17. 1 Thess. i 3.
[4] Eph. i. 3, 10, 12; iii. 6. Gal. iii. 27. Rom. xii. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 16.
[5] Acts iv. 12. John iii. 18.
[6] Acts x. 43; ii. 38; xix. 5. 1 Cor. i. 13.—Acts xv. 14, 17. Rom. x. 13—15.

our proof that we have done it? There are differences within our own communion on this very important point. But those differences do not affect the nature and extent of our dependence upon the free grace of GOD by which CHRIST JESUS "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the LORD."[1]

On the contrary, those who most strenuously insist on the necessity of union with CHRIST in His Body, the Church, by communion with a definite visible society, traceable in its existence and organization up to HIM, do so in the deepest sense of the utter inability of man to save himself,—his entire dependence on redeeming love for all the work, from first to last, by which he is to be translated from darkness into light and from condemnation into everlasting life. It is *because* "we put not our trust in any thing that we do,"[2] that we look TO CHRIST *for all*, in the way of His provision.

[1] 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. [2] Collect for Sexagesima.

It is *because* we believe forms and ordinances to be utterly worthless except as His Spirit gives them vitality and saving efficacy, that we insist on tracing them all to Him, and finding His promise to be in all, or utterly eschewing them.

The more thoroughly we believe, the more strenuously we inculcate, the depravity of nature and helplessness of condition of the unregenerate man; the freeness and fulness of justifying and sanctifying grace; the entire absence of all claim of merit in the receivers; the need of a change of heart, wrought by the hidden working of the Spirit in the inner man; the dependence of the new birth for its beginning, of the renewed life for its continuance and growth, wholly and solely on the influences from above that are shed abroad abundantly by God the Holy Ghost on such as neither resist nor quench them; the uselessness of all forms and ordinances to the adult partaker who has not a living faith; the increase of condemnation resulting from the abuse of spiritual privileges,

gifts and influences;—these fundamental principles of the Gospel the more we cherish and exalt, the better we are qualified to appreciate the full importance of the question, What is the Church? the more humbly we shall approach it, the more fervently we shall pray for Divine assistance in the solution.

Observe again, I beseech you, brethren, that so far from tampering with the holy Word of God, or setting aside its supreme and sole authority, it is the deepest reverence for its teaching that leads us to maintain the indispensableness of communion with the visible Church of Christ as organized by His command. We receive that teaching implicitly, and refuse to explain it away or lower it in accommodation to prevailing views of fitness. If others can be induced to admit that "the Body of Christ" is a mere abstraction, an unreal notion, a name for an aggregation of individuals without corporate organization or functions, *we can not*, because we dare not set aside the plain letter of Scripture, which says, "as the body is one, and

hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so ALSO IS CHRIST. For by one Spirit are we all *baptized into one body.*—*Ye* are THE BODY OF CHRIST, and *members in particular.*—So *we*, being many, *are* ONE BODY IN CHRIST, and *every one members*, one of another."[1] This is no description of "an aggregation" of independent persons or communities, but of "a body *whose life depends on its* UNITY." As we read it, we receive it; and are sure that we receive it rightly, *because the whole Christian world, for fifteen hundred years, without an exception, so received it.* Hard of admission as it may be to mere reason, (though indeed it is not hard, rightly taken,) trying as its consequences may prove to our natural feelings and propensities, (though indeed, to the spiritual mind, they are full of peace, and hope, and triumph,) we bow humbly in acceptance of this representation of the company of believers, because it is *the representation of the Bible.* In the Bible,

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 17. Rom. xii. 5.

in the Bible alone, we seek for all saving truth. From the Bible, from the Bible alone, we would derive all, even the least particulars of our faith and teaching. But it must be the Bible in its own pure, primitive meaning; not explained away, and accommodated to modern notions and evil times.

And now, dear brethren, what I would fain say in person to each one of you, on a topic among the most important that can occupy your thoughts, I offer to your use as I found it in this little volume ready prepared to my hand in a form better than I could give it. In discharge of my duty to GOD, and for His sake to you, I commend the following pages to your use. Give them, I beseech you, thoughtful and prayerful study. Let not prejudice wrest aside your judgment, nor any human authority deter you from embracing and holding fast whatever you shall find clearly proved, by sound reasoning, out of GOD'S holy Word. Remember that it is THE TRUTH OF GOD you are seeking to find out, and that you are *doing*

it IN GOD'S SIGHT. My earnest and continual prayer shall go up before Him, that if in any thing as your teacher *I* have erred, He will correct me, and show my error and save you from it; and that *you* may be guided by His blessed Spirit into the acknowledgment of all truth, and obedience unto it with a ready mind.

Your affectionate
brother in CHRIST,
and servant in the Gospel,
WILLIAM ROLLINSON WHITTINGHAM,
Bishop of Maryland.

BALTIMORE,
Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, 1844.

PREFACE.

To my fellow-members in the Church of Christ I desire affectionately and sincerely to dedicate the present little volume. My object is to direct their attention to that sacred society to which it is our privilege to belong, and with which our present happiness and our future hopes are so intimately connected. It is not, indeed, proposed to give a view of the polity or constitution of the Church, to consider its orders of ministers, its laws and canons, its synods, its rules of faith, its forms of worship, its authority. It is not proposed to furnish an outline of its

history under the varied scenes of persecution and prosperity, or any sketch of its future prospects, how it shall be universally established in the earth, or how it shall be finally purged from unworthy members, and be made perfect and complete. Nor, again, is it proposed to consider the Church under the various important attributes which inseparably belong to it, as being holy, and as being catholic, and as being apostolic, and the like. I would simply direct Christ's members to the fact, that there truly is a Church to which they belong, and define what that Church is by its essential principles.

Does the subject, Christian reader, appear too plain to require any comment, too simple for even the most ignorant to need instruction? Still, I pray you, give me your patient attention to what I have to say. For even if the question be already fully comprehended, yet may it not be useful to recal what we know, and by a careful contemplation of our Christian calling, to learn to cultivate more and more the character to which it ought to lead us? Or, perhaps, the

very fact of its simplicity may have caused it to be somewhat overlooked, while it cannot diminish its importance: and errors may have passed undetected, because they occur where we have so little expected to find them.

True, there was a time when the Church was well known and understood. When Christians were comparatively few in number, and were surrounded and pressed in on every side by enemies who despised and persecuted them on account of their faith, then the Church was clearly perceived to be not a mere name, but something definitely marked out, and discernible as a living reality. The fellow-feeling arising from common dangers, and the necessity of mutual encouragement and protection, made them lay aside private differences, and fully realize their bond of union as one body throughout the world. They were able to discover the fellowship they actually possessed one with another, by means of the daily exercise of those brotherly duties of affection which these trials and sufferings compelled them to render: and

the boundary line which surrounded them and kept them distinct from others, was too plainly marked out with the blood of martyrs to escape the observation of any.

But God has blessed his Church with peace. She is no longer a besieged city, but enjoys her liberty in quiet and security. But the danger hence arises lest her bulwarks become neglected; lest we hardly know where the boundary line runs, where the actual limits lie which divide the Church from the world, that unorganised and indefinite multitude from which she has in mercy been called forth. There is need that we walk about Zion, and go round about her, and tell the towers thereof; that we mark well her bulwarks and consider her palaces, that we may tell it to the generation following.

Yet suppose not that our task is the mere work of an antiquary, who searches into things almost lost in the obscurity of ages, from the love of investigation and curiosity alone. We are not tracing out the course of old walls which

surrounded a city long since in ruins, and whose inhabitants have long become extinct. Ours is an inquiry of personal interest, for our title and our rights depend upon it. The charter of our King is to the City of God, and if we pitch our tents without, and neglect to enter in, we cannot claim the privilege which the charter prescribes.

And let us remember, that here must be our security against the assaults of the opposers of the faith of Christ. At all times, although under various forms, there will be made the attempts of infidelity and corruption, if not of persecution, to undermine and triumph over the truth. In guarding against these attacks, in upholding the faith in its purity and its integrity, we need that bulwark of defence which Christ has Himself bequeathed, the witness of his Church as one Body throughout the world. We must act in concert, as one army of our God. And to this end we must understand in what our unity consists; we must be able to distinguish the banner under which we are mar-

shalled, and to know the watchword of the General to whom we have sworn allegiance.

It is a source of pleasure and satisfaction, that they for whom I have written these chapters are those who would not be otherwise than members of Christ's Holy Church. I have not written for such as care not about the Christian name, and who despise the Church of God, which He hath purchased with his own blood. To these the whole subject would prove distasteful and tedious. But it will be otherwise with those for whom I have written. Among them I may reckon upon meeting readers friendly disposed to what I have to say, and having at least the subject on which I write at heart. I may presume upon finding many already engaged in the service of their King, and seriously desirous of having their heavenly calling set before their view, in order that they may the more earnestly endeavour to fulfil the duties it imposes on them. It is my wish that these pages may, in some degree, be productive of such results.

Although any thing like direct controversy

has been avoided, yet it has been my endeavour to meet any objection which might be likely to suggest itself to the mind of the reader. I have desired to write calmly and without prejudice, and in that spirit of charity which on this subject, above all others, ought especially to be maintained. If there is here to be found any thing harshly or uncharitably spoken, I willingly retract it, and wish it unsaid, so far as it is harsh or uncharitable. For the truth needs not violence or heat of words; and if there is any truth in what I have written, I would that it should be conveyed in plainness and simplicity of expression.

I conclude in the words of one who has ably and learnedly written on the Church of Christ, and who has proved himself a champion of our own branch in particular against the aspersions cast upon it by its enemies, by "beseeching God, for his mercies' sake, to enlighten them that sit in darkness, to bring back them that are gone astray, to raise up them that are fallen, to strengthen them that stand, to confirm them

that are doubtful, to rebuke Satan, to put an end to the manifold unhappy contentions of these times, to make up the breaches of Sion, to build the walls of Jerusalem, and to love it still."

GEORGE HILL.

Shrivenham.

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PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

WHAT is the real and strict meaning of the Church of Christ, would appear (it might be supposed) to the most indifferent person, an inquiry not unworthy of his attention, whatever were his faith, or sentiments concerning religion. To us, however, who look to Christ Jesus as to our God and Saviour—who receive his words and institutions as the words and institutions of God, and who acknowledge that there is none other Name but his given among men whereby we must be saved,—to us it is far more than a subject deserving merely of curiosity and speculative inquiry;—it is one of the deepest interest

and importance. And further, professing as we do, our belief in this Church, as one of the articles of our Creed, it is plainly a part of our general duty of yielding a reasonable faith, not to suffer our profession on this point to be ignorantly made, or but obscurely known. Our whole faith is designed to be directed to the bringing forth its appropriate works, yet unless in some degree known and understood, it must be fruitless and unprofitable. Since, therefore, from the doctrine of "the Holy Catholic Church," in which we declare our belief, some moral is doubtless intended to be drawn, some lessons of brotherly kindness towards her members—of subordination to her rulers—of confidence towards her Head, we cannot remain ignorant of the doctrine, without being exposed to the danger of failing in the important duties which depend upon it.

Giving then all diligence, (according to the Apostle Peter's rule of profession in Christian excellence,) in adding to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge; and desiring that we may neither be barren nor unfruitful in our holy profession, we enter upon our inquiry, What is to be understood by "the Church of Christ?" Let the question before us be clearly understood.

It is not proposed to consider the Church in a spiritual point of view, in its hidden privileges and its inward blessings. Important as such a subject might be, our present object is mainly and principally to view it in its external features, as it is outwardly discernible;—as it not only presents itself to the mind of the Christian, but also stands forth before the world at large.

Further, it is not designed to inquire into the marks by which a sound Church may be distinguished from an unsound, but the marks whereby that which truly is the Church of Christ may be distinguished from that which is not the Church of Christ. These two questions are often confounded, but for a right understanding of the subject must be kept distinct in the mind. For as when we speak of *a true man*, in the sense of an actual veritable man, one who is truly such, and no counterfeit—we must not be understood as if speaking of *a true man* in the sense of a man trustworthy and honest, so now let it be observed we do not ask the question, What is a true or sound Church?—with this the present treatise has nothing to do:—our inquiry is rather What the Church of Christ truly is.

Definition.

To this inquiry the answer which is proposed is simply this:—THE

Church of Christ is, The one Society of Believers which was founded by Christ Jesus.

We shall proceed in the following chapters to confirm in order, each one of the material points in this definition. Our object will be to show that the Church, (1st.) *consists of Believers;* (2nd.) *constituted a Society;* (3rd.) *which is one;* and (4th.) *was founded upon earth by Christ Jesus.* And these points, fully understood, will be found to include the essential particulars which combine to make up the idea of the Church, and will be sufficient to enable us to recognise it in its various branches, wherever they may be found.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHURCH CONSISTS OF BELIEVERS.

AMONG those higher powers of discernment with which God has endowed man, is that by which he feels himself mysteriously overwhelmed with the sense of something above him and around him, far beyond his knowledge and conception. He finds in himself, and in all things terrestrial, a deficiency which he cannot supply, and often feels a kind of restlessness for something purer and more satisfying than any thing which he here enjoys. And then there is the deep, dark mystery of death before him, which he seeks, but seeks in vain, to fathom. He finds himself here for a few short years in the light of life, but whither he shall pass in the night of death, or where he shall wake again, this by his own philosophy he cannot tell.

These yearnings of the soul of man form that part of his constitution which has fitted him to

be a religious being. He is made and adapted for faith:—for laying hold on some hope which shall reveal a supply for his deficiencies, which shall ease him of his restlessness—give him something for his soul to confide in—direct his aims to high and holy things—yield him comfort in death, and a ray of light beyond the grave. Such a hope is set before him in the Gospel. It has revealed to him a way of salvation, and brought life and immortality to light. And it not only invites him to believe, but demands faith as the grand indispensable requisite, without which he cannot be admitted into the covenant which it proposes. Men are received into membership in the Church, not as being of this nation or of that, not as being great or learned, not for personal distinction's sake or reward, but simply as men of faith in the Gospel of Christ. Thus, Philip's reply to the officer who desired Christian baptism was, "If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest." To which the officer answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."[1] And those admitted into the Church upon the first preaching and miracles of the Apostles are described

[1] Acts viii. 37, 38

as, "They who gladly received the word," or simply, as "believers," who as such, were "baptized," and "added unto the Lord."[1] There could be no higher quality required from man than this pure and holy faith—no higher scope at which to aim in the constitution of any body of men. For this faith is in its objects most exalted, in its influence most purifying. It is the root of all holy thoughts and acts—the soul's communing with God—the wing of the soul which bears it to heaven—and the key which opens the mysteries of the unseen world. And there is this benediction connected with it, "Blessed are they which have not seen and yet have believed."

Who are Believers?

The question which now presents itself is, Whom are we practically to account Believers? With the heart we know that man believeth, and it is true that in his works his faith must be displayed. But we are men, and can neither see into the heart of others, nor with any certainty decide upon the motives of their actions. In our own individual case, indeed, we must examine into the reality and genuineness of our faith, nor rest

[1] Acts ii. 41; v. 14.

content till we behold in it its fruits: but in respect of others, we are expressly commanded not to judge. Our general rule therefore must be, in the matter of faith, to account others only as they account themselves. He, who professes himself a believer, we must esteem to be a believer, so far as regards the general classification which our present argument requires. Especially it is just to consider *him* a believer by whom this profession has been openly made in solemn sacrament before God and the congregation—a ratification far more serious than that of ordinary oath: and we must continue to esteem him as such, until by some public act or declaration of his own, he would be understood to have renounced the faith which once he professed.

Those who profess Faith.

We need no argument to prove, that among those whom we thus account as believers, there will be false believers as well as true. There will be the self-deceiver, and he who attempts to deceive others on the one hand, as well as the genuine and sincere on the other. In the Church, therefore, as consisting of believers, we may expect that the same mixture of good and evil will be found. And the Scripture under various emblems plainly represents that such

must be its character. The vine had dry and barren branches, as well as good and fruitful ones. The net of the kingdom of Heaven gathered of every kind, both good and bad. The tares were sown by the enemy among the wheat in the field, and grew up with it, the servants not being permitted to root them up, lest they should root up the wheat also. The end of the world will reveal a wide difference between the two classes which are thus described; but till then, we must judge of them by their profession, and deem them alike as believers.

Those who being incompetent have Sureties for their faith.

But further, in the number of believers must be included not only those who personally make a profession of faith, but also they, who being incompetent of faith in themselves, profess faith in the person of others who act in their stead. These cannot, we may be sure, be guilty of actual disbelief, or a rejection of the faith; and on this ground, they may, perhaps, be even more readily admitted to the name of believers than the former, by whom a profession might outwardly be maintained, while actual infidelity bears sway within. But a stronger claim in their behalf rests on the declaration, that "God accepteth a man according to that he hath, and

not according to that he hath not." They have not the exercise of faith, because they have not yet the power; but the Church pledges her's, and God, who was wont to deal with his people the Jews, not individually only, but as a nation, receives them and owns them as believers upon the Church's faith, openly declared in their name, in the profession made by their sponsors.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS A SOCIETY.

IT has been shown in the preceding chapter, that the Church consists of believers; believers indeed, known and accounted such only by their profession; yet since our inquiry respecting the Church relates to it as it is discernible by outward marks and notes, it suffices that the faith of those who compose it, be in like manner estimated as it is outwardly declared.

But the definition proposed assigns a limitation: it describes the Church, not as believers merely, but as *a society* of believers. The object of the present chapter will therefore be to prove that believers who compose the Church, are necessarily believers formed into one body—that it is in fact a society. What is the bond or principle of unity—what it is which makes them one, and unites them all into a whole, will be the subject treated of in the chapter which follows.

Hitherto, while considering the Church only in the separate individuals who compose it, we have not met with any difference of opinion deserving of particular notice. But now that we have entered upon the consideration of the Church in its collective capacity, we find three distinct opinions very extensively prevailing on the subject. These opinions it would be very easy to assign to their respective parties, to the principles with which they each most consistently combine. At the same time, unaccountable as it may be, through the want of consideration, they are to be found indiscriminately held by those whose sentiments on other religious matters would generally be found to agree. It will be best, therefore, to state them simply, and examine them on their own merits.

Three opinions stated.

The Church, according to many persons, is *the whole number of believers.* It matters not where or how, singly or together, so as they believe in our Lord and Saviour, they are his Church; and the Church, as we can discern it, is the whole number of those who profess this faith. This is the first of the opinions which prevail on the subject.

The opinion of others is, *the Church is the whole number of societies of believers.* It is

quite possible, these would admit, to be a believer in Christ, and yet not a member of his Church, because still an unenrolled believer, an unbaptized person. In order to be a member of the Church, it is necessary to be a member of some Christian society; and by being individuated into a particular community, we obtain an entrance into the Church Catholic; so that the Church does not consist of the whole number of believers, but it consists of *the whole number of bodies or societies of believers.*

The third opinion is that which has already been stated in our definition. The Church is itself *a society of believers.* It is a number of persons not separate and distinct, but, as believers, combined together into one fraternity. As individuals, indeed, they are many; and as particular Societies, or Churches, they are many; but there is also some real and actual bond which unites them, and constitutes them one society.

Is the Church a Class of men, or a Society?

Now it will be seen that the two former opinions, although widely different from each other, are yet alike in one respect: that they describe the Church as denoting a class or description. The one says, It is a certain class of men;—the other, It is a certain class of societies: so that the ques-

tion is simply, Is the Church, taken collectively, *a society*, or is it *a class?* And if it can be shown that it is the former, it must follow that both the opinions must be rejected, in which it is viewed as the latter.

What is a Class?

I am writing for plain people, and am therefore desirous, before proceeding further, to make as clear as possible what is meant by the two words—*a class*, and *a society*, and to point out the distinction of the one from the other. Now what do we mean by the former, when used by us ordinarily in other matters? If we were speaking of any of the various professions of life, we might probably make use of the term; we might call, for example, all labouring men *a class of people;* tradespeople, or farmers, or the gentry, distinct *classes* or descriptions of men. It seems we perceive a certain similarity in the pursuits and mode of procuring a livelihood among the individuals composing each of these sets; and hence, although every individual is wholly independent of the rest, we in imagination put them together, and speak of them as a class. In like manner, to add further examples, we may range together all charitable people in the world; as being individuals alike in this respect, that they have each a disposition

of benevolence and kindness, and exercise themselves accordingly in works of charity, we view them in our own minds, and speak of them as *a class*. So, again, temperate people; for these, as being alike in this, that they never give way to excess, we naturally, in our minds, classify together, however distinct they may be, and dissimilar in all other respects. When Linnæus, the great naturalist, arranged plants into their various classes, he did not combine them together under appropriate names, from any real connexion which one plant had with another: a sweet pea has nothing more to do with a laburnum, although they stand together in the same class, than it has to do with a thistle or a pear-tree, in another. He examined only in what points one flower corresponded with another, and then distributed them into their respective classes, solely on the ground of the similarity perceived.

What is a Society?

On the other hand, if we observe how we ordinarily use the word *society*, it will be perceived that we imply by it, not similarity only, but a certain actual joining together and connexion of the members which compose it. We speak of charitable persons, it has been already observed, as being a description

or class of people; but we call them a society, if they join together, for the furtherance of some common design, into an organized and connected body. Temperate people we may call a class; but if any enrol themselves together, as such, we naturally designate them a temperance society.

Criterion of distinction between a Class and a Society.

The difference to be observed is this: in a *class* there is no real union; the parts have nothing to do with one another; only we see in them some points of resemblance, and thus think of them together, as a notion, and name them together—like a heap of wheels wholly out of gear, which we may, notwithstanding, class together, and call machinery. A society, on the contrary, is a reality, an union, which exists elsewhere than in our own minds. It is an actual organization, with all its parts bearing to one another a mutual relation; like the corresponding pieces of machinery no longer separated, and only existing as individual wheels, but put together into a system, and capable of working as an engine. And this distinction between a class and a society we may, in all cases, readily detect, by observing that a class (being nothing really existing) can have no founder, has no rules, no discipline, requires no formal admission, and permits of no

formal rejection; whereas the reverse of all this must be the case in respect to a society. The classes of plants, for example, as arranged by Linnæus, were not founded by him; for the similarities among them, which he brought to notice, had existed long before: he only combined them accordingly in a sort of imaginary union. The class of temperate people, again, cannot have been the institution of any founder, because it also exists only as a notion; and the belonging to this class of men, or the ceasing to belong to it, depends solely on the simple fact of being temperate or not, and by no means on any mode of admission, or discipline, or rejection, which any may have the power to exercise. A society, on the contrary, possesses these attributes; for being an actual combination, there must have been some one who has produced the combination; and being a combination according to system and organization of parts, there must be some rule and order by which it is so organized: and thus the having a founder, and discipline, and officers, and modes of initiation, and of expulsion, constitute the distinguishing marks whereby a body of men may be known as a society.

The Church is a Society, If now we have gained any insight into the meaning of these two words, and are able, in some degree, to discern the one from the other, we may proceed to show, from the criteria already given, that the Church is not a mere class or description of persons, but an actual society. In the first place, *it has a founder*. The Church claims, as its great Head and Founder, the Lord Jesus Christ: it ascribes its first existence to his selection and appointment of members; and its principles, and objects, and rules, have proceeded from his divine wisdom. It was begun in the Apostles, whom He expressly chose to be witnesses of all He did and suffered upon earth, and to whom He fully taught the great truths of his holy faith;[1] and in testimony of this it has received his name. It is the Church of Christ. He is the Head of his Body, the Church; and from Him the whole family in heaven and earth is named.[2]

because it has a Founder,

and mode of initiation, Again, the Church has an initiatory sacrament. Baptism was by our Lord Himself appointed to be the sacred rite of admission into the number of his disciples, the

[1] Luke xxiv. 45—48. Acts i. 2.

[2] Rom. xvi. 16. Col. i. 18. Eph. iii. 15.

door into his Church. "Go ye," was the commission to the Apostles, "and teach" (or "make disciples of") "all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[1] The believer in Baptism is then first received into covenant with God; and all the promises of forgiveness of sins which are made to those who believe, are then personally applied and sealed.[2] Hence the first preaching of the Apostles was, "Repent, and be baptized," as declaring to all who embraced the faith which they proclaimed, that Baptism was the first step, which need not afterwards be repeated, whereby they might enter into the inheritance of the promises of God. Now if as soon as an unbeliever becomes a convert to the faith of Christ, he *by that act* of conversion alone becomes a member of the Church, there would be no use in this appointed mode of incorporating members, no meaning in this holy ordinance. Yea, why might not the mere believer, claiming to be a member of the Church on the ground of his belief in the Christian faith, assert at once the full privilege of being partaker of the mysteries of the Lord's Supper?

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19. [2] Mark xvi. 16. Eph. i. 13.

So that the fact of there being an initiatory sacrament is a plain evidence that the number of those among whom it admits any person is an actual body or society.

But let us suppose the objection to be raised, that Baptism is initiatory, not absolutely into the Catholic Church, but into some particular Church or community of believers; and that it cannot consequently be adduced as a proof that the Church Catholic is a society, but only that particular Churches are societies, which none would be disposed to deny. Such a view of the nature of Baptism would be wholly at variance with the Apostolic declaration, that there is One Baptism; for it would increase the number of Baptisms to the number of the particular Churches into which the holy rite admitted new members. None, it is hoped, would seriously admit such a degradation of this sacrament from its exalted dignity and rank of being an act of admission into Christ's holy Church Universal, into a mere act of admission into a local community, conferring membership in that particular community alone. It is opposed to the spirit of the entire service of Baptism, as used in the Church of England, and other Churches throughout the world: and members

of one religious denomination will often have their children baptized by ministers of another, because they look upon the Sacrament—and they do so justly—as one whereby they are grafted not exclusively into some particular Church, but absolutely into the Church Universal. Indeed this Catholic character of Baptism is admitted by most denominations in the very principles upon which their societies are conducted. For admission into the society of many of the ordinary denominations must in many cases be wholly distinct from the time and ceremony of Christian Baptism. The individual is baptized perhaps in infancy—in riper years he enters into their society: and so again, if any one leaves the sect of which he has hitherto been a member, and joins himself to another, he is not by most parties required again to receive the form of Baptism, but some other rite of admission is deemed sufficient to introduce him into the new fraternity. Thus Baptism must be, and by all parties is admitted to be, an incorporating not merely into a particular body of believers, but into the Church at large; and as such it may fairly be placed in the list of the marks whereby the Church is

distinguished from a mere class, and shown to be in itself a real and actual society.

and a sacrament of fellowship,

Again, we infer that the Church is a society, because it possesses an especial sacrament of fellowship in the Holy Eucharist: this holy communion is the "mystery of peace," and the "sacrament of society"—an act of religious testifying and ratifying of an union existing among the members. "We being many," says St. Paul, "are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread." And that the union or society to which this Sacrament testifies is not of a local or party character only, is plainly evinced in the nature of the holy rite itself: it directs us to the one great Head of his Church, in whom is neither barbarian, Scythian, bond, or free. It may indeed, in an especial manner, kindle love and harmony among those who personally communicate together; but it must likewise be felt and prized as a participation with a body more widely diffused—the mystical body of Christ, which is the blessed company of all faithful people.

and officers and rules.

Again, the Church has its ministers and officers—its discipline and powers of excommunication. It does not con-

sist of isolated, unconnected individuals, but of members in a mutual relation to each other, of an organization of pastors and flocks. St. Paul therefore writes, "God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers."[1] To Timothy, as one bearing authority in the Church, the same Apostle gives direction to award honours to deserving elders, to try offenders, to ordain to the office of the Christian ministry, to reprove, to rebuke, to exhort; while others he exhorts to obey them that have the rule over them, and submit themselves, "for," says he, "they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account."[2] The two sacraments, also, of which we have already spoken, in themselves necessarily imply the existence of officers in the Church, and of an authority to admit or to reject those who would partake of its privileges. It may be demonstrated from them, that these ministers and officers, however limited may be their individual jurisdiction, are yet ministers (in their respective order, as bishops, priests, or deacons) of the Church at large; for the Sacraments are sacraments of the Church

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11. Rom. xii. 6—8.
[2] Heb. xiii. 17. 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

Catholic, and consequently they by whom they are administered, must be ministers of the Church Catholic. The authority of each lawful minister, although exercised in one congregation only, is not confined to that particular Church, but extends to the whole body. Thus Baptism being, as it has been already shown, the way of incorporation, not into a particular Church only, but into the whole body of Christ—he who lawfully administers Baptism is a minister of the whole Church. The Holy Communion is an act of fellowship with the blessed company of all faithful people; he, therefore, who has the right to admit or to excommunicate, must be a minister of the same blessed company. By these marks we know the Church to be a real society; not merely as limited to local communities, not merely over the individuals who are co-worshippers in one congregation, but as one universal body, she has her officers, her corporate powers, her discipline, her organization. The jurisdiction of her ministers may be limited to a congregation, a parish, or a diocese, or a province, but their official acts are the acts of the Church at large —themselves are the ministers in the temple of God.

Such are the marks by which we discern the Church to be an actual society, as distinguished from a mere class; a reality, and not a vague, unreal abstraction;[1] a corporation, and not a mere description of individuals. Let us briefly notice, that many of the metaphors under which the Church is spoken of in Scripture, expressly denote this its corporate character. It is described as Abraham's seed;[2] as the household of faith;[3] as the family of God;[4] as a city, or body of citizens;[5] as a fold;[6] as one bread and one body;[7] as a temple;[8] as the kingdom of heaven;[9] as the branches in the vine.[10] In all these various metaphors we find one common feature, that of combination of their respective parts; and the especial idea which they are intended to convey, must be this associated corporate character of the Church, as one body fitly joined together and compacted. If the Church were a class of people merely, it would have sufficed to have called them men of faith;

Scriptural illustrations prove it a society.

[1] See note 1, at the end.
[2] Gal. iii. 29.
[3] Gal. vi. 10. Eph. ii. 19.
[4] Eph. iii. 15.
[5] Eph. ii. 19. Heb. xii. 22.
[6] John x. 16.
[7] 1 Cor. x. 17.
[8] 1 Pet. ii. 5.
[9] Matt. xiii.
[10] John xv. 5.

but they are a *society*, and therefore are more appropriately called Abraham's seed. If it were a class merely, it would have sufficed to have called its members living stones; but being a society, the Apostle completes his metaphor by adding, "built up a spiritual temple." In like manner, though individually they are sheep of Christ—the servants of God—grains of corn in the heavenly garner, or the separate members of Christ—yet as being a Church, as viewed collectively, the scriptural emblems appropriately convey the further idea of an union existing among them, and describe them as members organized into one body, grains combined into one bread, servants forming together the kingdom of God, or constituted as his united household, and sheep folded under one Shepherd, and in one fold.

Such are some of the simple yet striking metaphors under which the Church of Christ is spoken of in Holy Scripture; and from these, as well as from the appeal to the actual nature of the Church itself, its origin, its sacraments, its ministry, we must infer that the Church is not a mere class, but indeed an actual society. Consequently, both of the opinions respecting the Church must fall to the ground, in which it is

held to be a class only. It can be neither a mere class of individuals, according to the one opinion; nor a mere class of societies, according to the other. It is something more: it is a body knit together, and united. It is itself a society, a real actual community, to be discerned and known as any other society may, and to be distinguished from all others by its own peculiar constitution, and history, and origin, and objects.

The second opinion further discussed.

Here the present chapter might have been brought to a close. But I am unwilling to pass on without making a few observations relating more expressly to the second definition, which describes the Church as all societies of believers. Hitherto we have only viewed this definition as it falls into the same error as the other rejected definition falls into, namely, that of making the Church the name of a class. It approaches, however, nearer the truth, and being thus more likely to mislead, requires that its peculiar deficiencies should be separately noticed. The definition now spoken of has this very important recommendation, that it rejects the absurdity of supposing that it is possible to belong to the Church in the abstract, without belonging to the Church

The Church Catholic not distinct from particular churches.

in some particular portion. To imagine, indeed, the Catholic Church to be any thing distinct from the particular societies, or churches, which compose it, would be as absurd as to imagine the human body to be something distinct from its members. It would be like asserting that England was a territory distinct from the counties which compose it, so that a man could be a native of England, and yet not a native of some particular district. I remember being told by a religiously disposed man, that he professed the principles of the "Baptists," and always attended their place of meeting, although he had not joined their "Church." He belonged (he said) to no "Church." When he was asked whether he thought he was a member of the Church of Christ, he answered, with much surprise, that he considered that all true believers were such. So that here is a man who belonged to the Church of Christ, but yet was not in any particular part of it, as if, to repeat the illustration just before given, a man could be in England and not in some particular county. He could understand how the mere profession of the tenets of the Baptists did not make him a member of their society, but yet thought that the mere profession of the faith of a Christian was enough to make

him a member of the Church Catholic. He had a definite notion of the "Church of the Baptists;" but when he came to speak of the Church of Christ he took it to be a mere abstraction without parts, and thought that he could be a member of it in the general, although not yet in any definite branch.

The particular churches must be associated into one.

Rejecting this absurdity, the definition which we are now considering, rightly acknowledges that something more is required in order to constitute Church-membership, beside the being simply a believer. It says, the members of Christ must be associated members, incorporated into some company of believers. Thus it maintains this important truth, that the idea of the Church implies an actual joining together. The believer must be associated to be in the Church; as the leaf must be on a bough, in order to its being reckoned part of the tree. But then it stops here; it rests satisfied with having the individuals combined into companies, while these companies still remain distinct and separate from each other. The Church is still no more than an abstraction, though it be of bodies of men and not of individuals. There is just enough of the truth admitted, to show that we must admit

more. For if any joining together is requisite, there must be a complete joining together of the whole. It is not sufficient that the privates be formed into battalions, the battalions must also be marshalled as an army. It is not sufficient that the leaf be on the bough, the bough must be on the trunk: if the bough happen to be dissevered, the leaf which adheres to it is in no wise more on the tree than the dry leaf which is fluttering about by itself in the wind. And in like manner, in order to be in the Church, it is not sufficient to belong to a company of believers, to be an associated or incorporated member of a Christian community, unless that community is itself a part of the Church, and in some sense forms with it but one society.

We do not then deny the existence of particular churches, or the necessity of belonging to one, if we are members at all of the Church Catholic. The leaf which adheres to the tree, must be in particular adherence to its own respective branch. It is an absurdity to suppose that the Church Catholic can exist distinct from particular churches: but then we must further maintain, that being composed of such particular churches, it is moreover a real society. From all the evidence which has been advanced, we

must infer that it is not a mere genus comprehending other societies under one general name; it is itself a society of societies, combining the many communities of which it consists into one united body.[1]

The Church of Christ is not the aggregate, or whole number of believers, but it is the whole number of its members, of those believers who have been incorporated into it:—it is not the aggregate, or whole number of societies of believers, but it is the whole number of those societies of believers which are its parts and branches. For the whole Church is an organization, and those individual believers who belong to it, and those societies or churches of believers which belong to it, must be individuals and societies formed into one consistent whole, by some common uniting bond.

[1] Note 2.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS ONE.

IF the reader has gone along with the argument in the preceding chapter, and feels satisfied that the Church is a society, he has already an argument that the Church is one. He already, therefore, feels that there is a reality and force of meaning in the Apostle Paul's declaration, "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus:" and he can enter into the general spirit of our Saviour's beautiful prayer, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." The Church is one—not merely ought to be one—should strive to be one —but *is* one. The Church is one, not merely because it happens not to be more than one, but because it cannot be more than one. "Ecclesia

una est et dividi non potest," says St. Cyprian.[1] The Church is one, and cannot be divided.—It is one essentially, even as God is one.

But we require to know in what this unity consists. We look round, perhaps, upon the countries professing Christianity, and seeing everywhere many actual divisions among those who are called Christians, and much want of unanimity, and little intercommunion both between individuals and between Churches, we are at a loss to know where is the one society of Christ's Church Catholic, or to find a clue by which we may assure ourselves that we are one in that Church. Knowing its essential oneness, and at the same time seeing the actual disordered state of Christians, we begin perhaps to suspect that the Church must be some very small body; and wonder why, with all its comprehensiveness of design, and its universal adaptation to the wants of man, it should have remained so small and so undistinguished a body. But it is not thus: on the contrary, when we discover what is the true principle of unity in the Church, and apply that principle as the criterion by which to ascertain which are actually branches and limbs

[1] Ep. 74. (Ed. Tauchn.)

in that unity, instead of finding the Church to be only a small section of professed believers, we shall find that it includes within its pale the vast majority; and that it may, not only on the ground of its design and capabilities, but even on the score of its actual extent, justly claim to be called Catholic, one everywhere.

Our present inquiry then is, What is that principle of unity, whereby in the Church we are not separate independent believers, or separate independent societies of believers, but bound together in one body? in what consists that unity which brings us alltogether, and makes us all one?

Unity of the Church consists not in meeting together,

In the first place, it is plain that all Christ's members in his Church are not considered one, as a congregation might be called one, because they meet all together in one place. At one time it was possible for the Church to do this. When the number of the disciples whom Christ left behind Him in the world consisted only of "about one hundred and twenty names," then they could, and did actually all meet together; as, for example, on the day of Pentecost they "were all with one accord in one place."[1] But

[1] Acts ii. 1.

ever since that day, an assembly of the entire Church together has been impossible: its numbers have become too great to admit of such an unity as this. Christ had intended that the society which He instituted should not be confined to Jerusalem, but that it should extend from city to city, and from village to village, from nation to nation, and from country to country, till all the world should be filled with the knowledge of God and of the way of salvation. Accordingly it *has* been thus extending. Gentiles, as well as Jews, have received the religion of the Gospel. The members of Christ may be found in countries far distant from each other—to the east and to the west, with the wide sea between them. It is plain, then, that the unity of the Church consists not in the whole assembling together in one place; and unless Christ has prayed in vain, "that they all may be one," men may be of the one body, and united together within the one fold, who have never met, whose very names and existence may be unknown to each other.

not in similarity of forms and rites,

Since, then, Christ's members cannot all meet together, and so be one, yet (2ndly) may not their unity consist in their all using the same sacra-

ments, and services, and forms of religion, although it be at different places? But to this it must be replied, that *similarity* can never constitute *unity*. It is true, indeed, that Catholic minds will experience pleasure in reflecting how far they are praying, as it were, with one heart and with one mouth, with their fellow believers, although widely dispersed; and will delight to think that they are using the very words of prayer and praise, in which holy men of old have joined, who have now entered into their rest: but, at the same time, this uniformity of services is rather a sort of evidence and exemplification of the unity of the Church, than the matter in which that unity really consists; for there may be no unity subsisting even where the same external rituals, and forms, and discipline are adhered to, just as regimentals may be assumed and worn by men who have no connexion with the troops to whom the dress properly belongs. On the other hand, there may be unity between churches, where different services and customs prevail. For if we strictly consider it, it is no more possible for the Church, spread, as we know that it is, over the whole world, to worship in precisely the same forms, than it is for them to assemble in the same

place. The language spoken by different nations is not the same; so that the words must vary: the expressions in use in different countries are not the same, they have, moreover, different civil rulers and bishops to pray for, so that the style and matter likewise of their religious services must vary. Hence, from the necessity of the case, it is plain that the unity of the Church does not consist in a mere similarity of forms and services and rites. Ceremonies may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners, consistently with God's word, and yet the real oneness of the Church remain unaffected.

3rdly. But perhaps it will be said, "The mere outward forms, it is true, are nothing; that which makes the whole Church throughout the world one, that which constitutes its unity, is the common profession of the great and fundamental doctrines of our holy faith." In that form of sound words, the Apostles' Creed, our profession of faith was made when we were admitted in Baptism into the Church of Christ: none can be a member of the Church, even in name, unless he has professed to hold the fundamental doctrines therein contained, and no church can continue a sound church except

not in similarity of faith,

as holding uncorrupt the same truths. But no resemblance or likeness, consisting in the common profession of the same faith, can constitute the unity of the Church. The Church has already been proved to be a society, and the unity into which we are inquiring must be an unity which combines it as a society; but similarity is the ground upon which things are referred to a particular *class*, so that if all the Church's unity is to be resolved into this, it would cease to be a society at all. Strictly speaking, as it was observed under the preceding head, similarity and unity are two distinct things, and the former may exist without the latter. If we observed a number of buildings precisely resembling each other in form, materials, &c. we might speak of them as having unity of design, but we could not say there was unity of house.

There is a story told of a man, who, wishing to keep bees, set himself to catch as many as he could among the flowers, and then shut them up together in a hive. None can deny but that they precisely resembled one another in appearance and nature; there was similarity, but yet notwithstanding there was no bond of unity existing among them, they were not a stock. In like manner a man may be a believer

in the great articles of the Christian faith, and so far exactly resemble other true believers, and yet may not, perhaps, be one with them in the body of Christ. There may be those who individually appear like the sheep of the good Shepherd, who yet are not within his fold.

Thus, then, we cannot consider similarity, whether it be in outward forms, or even in the fundamental matter of faith, as constituting that unity of the Church for which we seek. It is not meant, (be it remembered,) that it is unessential that there should be one faith to each and all, and the same holy sacraments duly administered; there must be one faith, and one baptism, as well as one God and one Lord: nor is it meant that it is a matter of indifference that we join in a holy uniformity with one mouth and one voice, sending up our common adorations to our Heavenly Father. These things, it is simply affirmed, do not constitute and effect that condition which St. Paul describes when he says, "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

But, 4thly, it is sometimes asserted, that the unity of the Church means peace and harmony among Christians; that it is Christian love or charity which con- not in unanimity,

stitutes its unity. But even this claim must fail. We often, indeed, use the word in the sense which is here given, but when we speak of the unity (or unanimity) which charity produces, we mean something very different from that which makes one the whole body of Christ. This may be made evident by many considerations. The unity which charity produces has for its contrary hatred, and rancour, and jealousy; the contrary to the unity which we are now discussing, is plurality. The unity which charity produces can be exercised only towards the living; the unity which joins together the Church, is one which unites the living members and the departed members—all in every place, and of every time, who having been once received into the family of God, have preserved unbroken that sacred fellowship. The unity of love and charity is a grace which we may pray for, as we do, for example, in the prayer for the Church militant, and in other prayers of our Church; the unity which forms our present inquiry cannot, strictly speaking, be a subject for prayer, because the Church cannot exist except as one. Again: the distinction will, perhaps, be rendered more evident if we consider that the unity of peace and charity may, and

ought to join us with all mankind, with the Pagan and the Jew, the Mohammedan and the idolater, with whom we cannot have that unity which makes the Christian Church to be called one. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:" this is a rule which extends to all, and we may not stand to ask the question, Who is my neighbour? But the Church is but a portion taken out of the world, and the bond which unites its members among themselves must be one which distinguishes and separates them from others, and cannot extend itself indiscriminately to all. And then, again, if it were peace and unanimity which constitutes the essential unity of the Church, would there not be reason to fear lest that unity now no longer exist? There have been too often breaches of charity within the Church:—there was contention even between St. Paul and St. Barnabas, so sharp that they departed asunder the one from the other;[1] there have been rival parties each condemning the tenets and doctrines of the other with much heat and bitterness of spirit, opposite factions rending the Church from motives of ambition and love of

[1] Acts xv. 39.

worldly power; while between the respective portions of the Church in different countries, friendly feelings have been destroyed, and visible communion has ceased to be maintained. Is it not plain, that if the essential oneness of the Church depended on its harmony, and unanimity, and love, that that oneness is lost, and that the Church itself is, in consequence, shattered and destroyed? But we have the prediction and promise of Christ himself, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The Church must stand for ever, and stand in that intrinsic unity without which she cannot be. It is sad indeed to know that such discords and variances, and rendings, have existed, yea, and do exist, among those who ought to be of one heart and of one soul, united in a holy bond of truth and peace, and faith and charity. They involve us in a fearful amount of guilt, as family hatred and civil wars are the more atrocious, because they take place between those who are bound by ties of nature to unitedness and peace; but as hostile citizens and brothers are still one in blood, so may there be found a real oneness in the Church, unaffected by the variances, and distinct from the harmony of its members.[1]

[1] Note 3.

5th. Nor, again, does the principle of the unity of the Church consist in its being all under the superintendence of one head bishop. This is the ground of unity which is maintained by those who limit the Church of Christ to such only as acknowledge the supremacy of the Bishop or Pope of Rome, the doctrine which is properly called popery. Now that this supremacy cannot be any bond of unity essential to the Church, is plain from this, that the Church existed many centuries without its being so much as claimed. For it was not authorized by any institution of our Lord: we read, indeed, of an occasion when, upon his confession of faith, St. Peter received an especial blessing and commission, and we know that the first converts on the day of Pentecost were made through his preaching; but these circumstances, and others which the Romanists advance, were not deemed by the early Church a sufficient reason for constituting him or his successors universal Bishops, or the Church of Rome mistress of all churches. For our Lord chose twelve as his disciples, and not one only. They were all the foundation upon which the Church was built.[1] He gave them

not in supremacy of one head bishop.

[1] Compare Matt. xvi. 18, with Eph. ii. 20, Rev. xxi. 14; also John xxi. 17, with Acts xx. 28.

all the same authority and the same commission in the administration of the sacraments.[1] He addresses Himself to ten of the Apostles, when, after his resurrection, He said, "As my Father hath sent me even so send I you;" and when He breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."[2] Hence we find no traces in the Acts of the Apostles, and the later inspired writings, of any supremacy of one over the rest then recognised in the Church; and among the canons of one of the earliest councils we find the encroachment of one bishop upon the territory of another is expressly forbidden, as contrary to the principles of the Church, and fostering the pride of worldly ambition.[3] In short, the doctrine in question was one which gained ground by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, and it was not till the thirteenth century that it received any formal recognition or approbation of the Church of Rome herself. Our argument, then, is this: if the union of all Christians under one supreme head on earth is the principle of unity which constitutes the society of the Church, then there was no Church

[1] Compare Matt. xvi. 19, with Matt. xviii. 18.
[2] John xx. 21—23.
[3] Council of Ephes. can. 8.

instituted by Christ, and no Church for many ages after Christ. For they were not then so united; they did not then acknowledge one supreme Bishop as their head and centre of unity. But the Church did exist then, and therefore this cannot be the essential principle of its unity. The Church was then an actual society, and its members not being bound together in their mutual fellowship, by having one head, were united by some other principle of society and unity.

But after all, the superintendence of one head bishop (whether as supreme, or with the more reasonable claim of presiding and being first among the rest) whatever may be urged for it, as the right constitution of the Church, would not effect a full and true unity.[1] For *in itself* it gives but the links of a chain laid together but not joined. So long as any one individual pope continues, the whole body under him are (it is true) united in a bond of unity. But the universal bishop must die; and by his death this unity is destroyed. When his successor occupies his room, there takes place rather the rejoining together the body of the Church by a

[1] Note 4.

new bond, than the continuance of the former union. Thus we have, as it were, the unity of each successive generation separately among themselves, but no unity of succeeding generations the one with the other. The unity of the Church becomes rather a series of successive unities; and we might infer that there have been as many successive churches, as there have been numbers in the series of the popes.

But the unity which we are seeking for, the unity which in reality joins the Church of Christ, must be such as not only binds in one all Christ's members on earth at present, but it must link them also with those that have preceded, and the times that are past. To render the supremacy, or primacy, of one bishop an actual continual unity, it would be necessary to combine the series of popes by some system of transmission of office in succession from one to another. Each pope must appoint and ordain his successor in his office, which we know is not the mode of their election. There must be no breaks in the chain; it must not be an unity which needs to be renewed itself by some further link of connexion.

But the insufficiency of the one visible head to constitute the principle of unity to the Church,

is further seen when we consider that it can at no time unite more than one of the two great portions into which the whole body is divided. Were it capable of being a centre of oneness to the Church on earth, still it could establish no unity between them and the Church in heaven. And, therefore, even though one Bishop were received by the whole Church on earth as its visible head, he would be the head of a part only of the Catholic Church, and could be no principle of unity to the whole. But the Church on earth and the Church in heaven, although widely divided in place and circumstances, is yet but one church, and one principle of unity must unite the whole. To know what constitutes the whole Church a society, truly and essentially one, one universally at all times and in all places, we must discover some bond which shall not only unite us into one brotherhood on earth, but shall connect us also with the saints which reign in heaven, and make us one body with the apostles and our Lord.

And now if that which makes the entire Church of Christ, as a society of believers, to be one, is not the having one head on earth, is not mere peace and concord and unanimity, is not even the profession in common of the same

holy faith, is not a mere similarity of forms and acts of religion, is not personal meeting all in one place for united worship—we must again ask, In what then does this unity of the Church really consist? what joins together all Christ's members now on earth in one body, and moreover joins them with all their brethren who have ever gone before; yea, even with Christ Himself?

Unity of the Church consists in its origin.

And the true answer is, This principle of oneness consists in their origin. What makes grandsons or great-grandsons one with those who have preceded them?—It is having a common ancestor. What makes all the different currents of a stream to be one?—It is their flowing from one spring. What makes all the various branches and leaves of a tree to be but one together?—It is the growing from the same root. In like manner what makes the Church of Christ to be but one?—It is the having one beginning; the descent from one origin. The members who composed it a hundred or a thousand years ago may be dead and gone; but by this principle of unity it is the same Church now that it ever was. For it is like the unity which subsists in a regiment of soldiers. We may hear it said that such a regiment fought in such battles, and on

such occasions—battles and times long past, and which have now become to us mere matters of history. The men who fought are not the same men as now compose the ranks,—every man may have been changed; yea, successor after successor may have occupied every post since the events took place: but it is still the same regiment, because it has never come to an end, or had a new beginning. It has gone on, and will yet continue, by successive supplies of recruits, a few at one time, and a few more at another time, still retaining its own name, and numbers, and colours—its own trophies of victory, its own spirit, and military fame. "The unity of the Church," says St. Cyprian,[1] "is preserved in her origin." And Tertullian[2] writes, "The Apostles founded churches in every city, from which churches, others springing up, have borrowed the germ of faith, and the seeds of doctrine, and still borrow, in order that they may become churches. And by this they also are deemed apostolic, as the offspring of apostolic churches. Every race is necessarily reckoned as belonging to its origin. Therefore these numerous and great churches are that one

[1] De Unit. Eccl. [2] De Præscript. Hær. cap. 20.

prime church founded by the Apostles, to which we all belong."[1]

Here then we have a *true and actual* unity. It is not a mere likeness or similarity, which would constitute us similar rather than truly one,—which would leave our union only a mental conception, a child of fancy—such as we create for our own convenience, when we discern some points of resemblance among many things, and consequently put them together under some general abstract name. On the contrary, we have here an actual point of contact;—we are made one, as we meet in one head, as we proceed from one beginning, as we flow from one veritable source.

And this principle of unity imparts a *complete* union. It gives unity to its sacraments, its ministry, its worship. It unites its members of every generation. Ascending to the very origin, there could never have been a time when this unity was wanting to the Church, while, as being itself the essence of the Church's perpetuity and power of continuance, it must last as long as the Church exists. Nor does this principle of unity confine the Church to any local limitations. The unity remains wherever the Church

[1] Note 5.

is established, as a family may leave its birth-place, and, spreading over all the earth, still retain its kindred and the blood of the common stock. Their line is gone out through all the earth; yea, as it becomes transplanted into heaven, the Church loses nothing of this its connexion with those who remain behind, nor ceases to be one with them in the family of Christ.

This principle of unity is further one by which we may distinguish which are the component parts of the Church, and which are not. To be in the unity of the Church is equivalent in meaning to being in the one Church; and not to be in the unity of the Church, is only another form for expressing not to be of the one Church. And thus when we know in what the essential unity of the Church consists, we may ascertain by its absence or presence whom the Church includes. From one pure fountain we may have seen many different streams to flow. One may take this course, and another that; their several lines may become more remote the further they flow from their common source, their branches more numerous, and the scenery by which they pass more diversified; but they are all one, and they flow with one water. But

should some neighbouring spring bubble forth, and claim to be in affinity and connexion with these streams, we have only to trace it back and discover whence it was, to detect the falsehood of its assumptions. The genuine stream when traced through all its course, will be found to terminate in the one true spring from which the other streams have proceeded; and the true Church will be no less plainly known, when examined as mapped down in the records of history, and traced upwards to its source.

And this principle of unity—thus actual, and complete, and practical—is such an unity as truly makes and constitutes what we mean by a society. Thus we find other societies, wholly distinct in nature and in object from the society of the Church, which are united by a similar principle. Some of my readers may be acquainted, for example, with some of the larger benefit clubs which extend themselves through most parts of this country, by means of branch lodges in different districts connected together. Now in what manner would it be necessary to proceed, in order to establish in any town not yet occupied, a lodge or branch society in connexion with some such "Unity," in order to enjoy the same privileges in common with all

its members? In other words, what is that bond of union which must unite us with the rest? It would be of no use to say, We will establish a lodge, and adopt rules and orders, and frame a constitution precisely similar with those of the society or "Unity" we propose joining. They would still disown us as any part of themselves. The union we must seek, must be one based on transmission or descent. It must be like that which we are now ascribing to the Church, one of succession. The individuals who propose the new society must obtain a certain number of members from some existing lodge duly qualified in conformity with the rules of their order, to establish a new lodge. By these must the first members be enrolled, and the new officers instituted, and henceforth they are one with the whole order. It matters not through how many successive steps the original institution may proceed; how many degrees of affinity may intervene, and appear to separate the elder and the junior branches of the entire body; they are all derived from the parent club: here is one principle of unity pervading the whole, and so they are one society.

And this unity is not affected by the fact that their local affairs are under their own indepen-

dent administration: the various branches may so far be all distinct bodies, but the reality of the unity of the whole is still recognised in their common funds, and in the mutual interchange of assistance and correspondence.

And thus so far as they are both societies, it is allowable that we draw a comparison between the Church of Christ, and the benefit club; and recognise in both a similar principle of unity, constituting each respectively in all its various ramifications one single society. Let us, however, while we apply this illustration, bear in mind the immeasurable difference which must exist between the two:—that our society is founded by one who was Himself God, and that the benefits of which its members are permitted to be partakers, are proportionably great. What can the club for mutual assistance in things of earth, with all its advantages, boast in comparison with those enjoyed by us as members of Christ? These are benefits for the soul, and not confined to the body—benefits for eternity, and not of a mere temporal nature—giving means of restoration from the deadly plague of sin, not from bodily sickness alone—supplying the means not how we may be decently interred, but how we may gloriously rise.

It may, however, be said, that the oneness which must exist between Christ and his members, may be understood in a hidden and spiritual sense, and that to this spiritual bond of unity we have not referred. This spiritual union is indeed frequently set before our notice by our Lord and his apostles in the word of God, and constitutes the true life of the Church, as the Spirit is the life of the body. This spiritual union, however, cannot exclude the necessity of an external and discernible bond of unity. For the Church has already been shown to be a society, a body of men organized and combined in an external system and community. There must, therefore, be some principle upon which as a society it holds together. This principle it has been our professed object to ascertain, as it is that to which the proposed definition of the Church directed our attention. Our main design is to describe the Church in its outward, external character—as it is seen by the world—as it is an object of sense, and capable of demonstration—as it is the visible pillar and ground of truth. We describe a tree or a plant by its outward form and parts, if we desire to make it more generally known, and to direct to it the attention of

others. We do not, when this is our end, analyze its interior structure and the flow of its juices. Now the result at which we aim in our present inquiry is of a similar kind as it regards the Church: namely, that it may be accurately discerned and truly known, and correctly appreciated. We exhibit it, therefore, as it is a Church—in its outward character as a society of believers. What kind of unity it has in that capacity as an outward society we have now determined; it is in fact the bond of having or being derived from a common origin. There is none beside which imparts that actual brotherhood which is a main feature in Christ's society—none else which is in any sort a demonstrable bond of Church unity. We shall proceed to distinguish this its unity from that of any other society, by a mark no less open to investigation and proof. For so far as it is a society, it is to be estimated and judged of as any other society might be, and it is the part of common sense and reason to treat of it in this plain and tangible form.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHURCH WAS FOUNDED ON EARTH BY OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

THE principle of unity in the Church is, as we have seen, its derivation from one origin. That origin, we come next to consider, is its institution on earth by Christ Jesus our Lord. When veiled in human flesh, He had come into our world of sin and sorrow, and for the sake of rebellious man deigned to dwell among us; then in furtherance of his great design in the redemption of the world, He founded his holy Church.

When the Church of Christ was founded.

But it will be said, Had God no Church in the world before Christ came? Our answer to this question must depend on the meaning in which it is asked: for if we take the words in our own sense and answer at once in the negative, we shall doubtless be misunderstood. If it is meant to ask,

Not before Christ came.

Had God no believing servants in the world before Christ came—had He no men of faith and holiness and prayer—no recipients of the dews of his heavenly grace?—God be praised, we must reply, we know that there were many such. Did not Abraham believe God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness?[1] Does not the apostle enumerate a great cloud of witnesses, who through faith obtained a good report? Yea, the time would fail to tell of all who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises.[2] The *faith* of the Church was no novelty, first introduced when Christ came. Repentance, the expectation of a Messiah, and trust in an atonement for sin, had long before been preached: they had been made known even from the fall of our first parents, and their expulsion from Eden; and God, who hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, had in sundry times and divers manners spoken in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.[3]

Or, if it be meant to ask—Had God no society of believing people before Christ came, called out of the world to be his peculiar, that

[1] Gen. xv. 6. Rom. iv. 3. [2] Heb. xi.
[3] Heb. i. 1, 2.

is, his own, people, and bound together by holy religious ties, ordained and sanctified by Himself?—then we must answer, It is true God had such a society. There was a chosen family of "sons of God" before the flood, the guardians of sacred truth, in the knowledge of God and of his promised redemption,[1] the preservers of his holy worship,[2] and the participators of his grace and blessing.[3] God also made a covenant with Abraham and his seed:[4] He made a covenant afterwards with the house of Israel, when "he took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt:"[5] and the greater part of the Old Testament is a history of God's chosen people and of his dealings with them. St. Stephen[6] describes the nation of the Jews during their wanderings as "the Church" (ἐκκλησία) in the wilderness, for they were truly a society called out from the world, and united in covenant with God.

But in the strict sense of the word Church,[7] as denoting *the Society of our Lord*, that body of which *we* are members, and of which we are

[1] 2 Pet. ii. 5.
[2] Gen. iv. 26.
[3] Gen. v. 24. Heb. xi. 4—7.
[4] Gen. xvii.
[5] Heb. viii. 9.
[6] Acts vii. 38.
[7] Note 6.

now treating, the Church was not planted in the world until it was established by Christ Jesus. He is the Mediator of a *new* covenant. He taketh away the old dispensation, the ceremonies, the sacrifices, the priesthood of the Jews, that He may establish a second dispensation.[1] The Apostle places the one in contrast to the other, and points out that the Jews living under the Mosaic law, were not living under the Gospel, and therefore, as a society, were wholly to be distinguished from the society of Christ. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

Let us not, however, depreciate the true privileges and blessings enjoyed by the old fathers. Although they were not the Church, they shared many of the blessings which the Church now enjoys, and they represented and typified the Church. Especially was it so with regard to the chosen people of Israel, and St. Paul, to the inquiry of the unbeliever, What advantage hath the Jew? replies, "Much every way, chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."[2] Nor can we doubt but that they who looked for the promised seed of

[1] Heb. viii. ix. x. [2] Rom. iii. 1, 2.

the woman, and in the appointed sacrifices anticipated the great propitiatory Sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, were as truly saved, through the Redeemer of mankind, as any in his Church. And now that they reign in heaven, they have been admitted into the full privileges of unity in that Church into which on earth it was not the will of God they should be admitted. Though while they lived here below they were not incorporated into the family of that Saviour in whom they believed; yet now they are incorporated, for they are come unto that which the Gospel has in a measure revealed to us, the city of the living God, "the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant."[1]

Not after Christ lived on earth.

And as the Church of Christ was not in the world before Christ came in the flesh, so also the evidence of history renders it impossible to place its institution at a later period. Not even its greatest enemies, in their efforts to effect its downfall,

[1] Heb. xii. 22—24. Eph. i. 10.

have ever ventured to pretend that it sprang up as an invention of more recent times, or that it assumes to itself an antiquity which does not belong to it, for the sake of imposing upon the ignorant. The matters of actual fact connected with its beginning and rise, are such as could never have been a mere fiction, and it is impossible that its holy rites and ceremonies, commemorative as they are of its first establishment, could have taken their rise at any other period of time than immediately upon those events of which they profess to be the memorials. The voice of history, denying the Church or its sacraments a later origin, cannot be gainsaid, when the possibility of deception or imposition is so remote.

By Christ Himself when on earth.

The distinguishing feature, therefore, by which we distinguish the Church from all other societies, that is, the whole family in heaven and earth named from Christ, from all other families, must undoubtedly be its foundation upon earth by our Lord Jesus Christ, when in our likeness He dwelt with men. This, our holy society, dates its years from Christ. It bears his name. A heathen historian writes, "Auctor nominis ejus Christus, Tiberio imperitante, per procura-

torem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat."[1] In Scripture He is called "the Author and Finisher of our faith;"[2] "the Head over all things to the Church, which is his body."[3] He took his first members out of the world to make them a body distinct from the world, and He says to them, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."[4] He tells them, "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am."[5]

Truly founded as a society.

Nor can it be supposed that He originated Christianity only as a name, or as the designation of a party, as a school of painters or philosophers is said to be founded. On the contrary, we find plain proofs of his institution of it in connexion with those especial particulars which we have seen are the peculiar marks and characteristics of a society. His disciples were distinct from the mere chance crowd which assembled from curiosity or self-interest. They were personally chosen by our Lord, and constituted a brotherhood by them-

[1] Tacitus, Ann. xv. 44.
[2] Heb. xii. 2.
[3] Eph. v. 23. 25. Col. i. 18.
[4] John xv. 19.
[5] John xiii. 13.

selves. And moreover, our Lord appointed among them different orders, and organized the whole body in a mutual relation of parts. As when the multitudes were miraculously fed in the wilderness, our Lord arranged them into companies, and distributed the bread through the hands of chosen ministers, so our Lord constituted his Church, and arranged his members in their proper rank and station—the ministers and those ministered unto, the rulers and those who were ruled, the pastors and they who were fed. And first, out of the whole number of his disciples He chose twelve, whom He named Apostles.[1] Afterwards He appointed seventy of inferior rank, and sent them to work miracles and to preach in the various cities of the Jews; for the harvest was great, but the labourers few.[2] And thus under Christ Himself, the great Bishop of our souls, personally present among them, the Church was fully constituted: while to each of these two orders, emanating alike from Himself, He pronounced this benediction and commission of authority, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me. He that heareth you, heareth me."[3]

[1] Luke vi. 13. [2] Luke x. 1, 2.
[3] Matt. x. 40. Luke x. 16.

The sacraments also it has been already proved, are evidences of a society; so that Christ, in appointing them, plainly appears to have founded the Church in that its corporate character. "Go ye," He says to his Apostles, "and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[1] And again of the holy communion, "This do in remembrance of me; for as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."[2]

Our Saviour then, it has been seen, did not merely deliver doctrines to chance hearers, but He chose disciples out of such as desired to learn of Him: He did not merely instruct and train a number of disciples, but He also organized them into their proper ranks and order: He did not suffer them to be externally disunited, He appointed in holy mysteries the emblem and the bond of love and brotherhood: He did not leave the body of his followers to dwindle away and become extinct after He should be removed from them, but He gave them a charter of perpetuity, and committed to his Apostles an authority to be transmitted downward to the end of time.

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19. [2] 1 Cor. xi. 25.

By these facts it is plain He hath founded an actual society. Thus hath He built a Church, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. He takes his own rank as the prime beginner and originator of the whole, and not only so, He is Himself of his Church, He is Himself a part of that which He originates. The society has its beginning in Him as well as from Him. He is, therefore, the fountain from which the whole stream flows, and of which it also consists. Not only does the whole body derive from Him its life and authority, but He is Himself in the body and of the body. It is the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

In order to take a more complete view how Christ is the Head of his Church, and thus to gain a better understanding of the definition under our consideration, it will be well to enter into some further distinctions. The faithful in Christ Jesus need not to have it now confirmed to them by proof, that He in whom they believe, being the express image of the Almighty Father, but born of a mortal woman, was both God and man: and that in these two natures perfectly existing, He is not two but one Christ. With these truths then before our mind, let us proceed

to examine more accurately the relation which as Head He bears to his Church.

Christ, the founder of the Church, is man.

Christ, on the one hand is man. Then, as man, He is Head of his Church, just as any man whatsoever may be head of any society or club of men which he may see fit to form. The head of any society or union of persons formed for objects of mere temporal utility, is he who first bands together individuals for the end he proposes—assigns to them the rules by which they are to act—the badges which are to denote that they belong to one fraternity—the mode in which they are to enrol others into their number—and the officers under whom they are to act. Such an one would be the head of the society formed, whether a benefit club, or a mercantile society, or a temperance society, or whatever it might chance to be. In this sense, the man Christ Jesus is the Head of his Church, as it has been already shown. For He first chose out his Apostles; He established the rules and principles of his society; He appointed the officers by which it should be governed; He fixed the badges and tokens of the brotherhood; and He ordained the mode in which new members should be enrolled, and the orders of the

ministry perpetuated. In these respects He is Head, as being man. As He wrapped his Godhead in manhood, and to the natural eyes was seen only as man,—so in establishing these its outward features, He exercised his natural human powers only: as He condescended to humble *himself* to our nature, so did He adapt his *Church* also to the nature and comprehension of man. He was Himself in the form of a man, and his Church He framed as a human society; He placed it in the care of human ministers: He left it to be perpetuated after the manner of human institutions, and in future ages to be known and judged of, in a great measure, as men would know and judge of any other long established society;—that every man who inquired might be able to satisfy himself, this is the actual body of men which received its first institution by the man Jesus.

He is also God.

But, Christ was more than man; He was also God. Then we find Him acting as Head of his Church in this nature also. He is Head as God—in a sense in which no man can have the power to be head of any society which he may institute—in the sense of being the source of Divine grace and assistance, the spring of life and healing virtue

which flow to all his living members. No mere man could confer such benefits as these. A man might indeed make useful regulations, and lay down beneficial plans—he might frame his union of individuals on such judicious principles, as might in various ways improve, and assist, and stimulate, and confirm them in the practice and pursuit of what was praiseworthy and pure. But he could not say, I will regenerate you in your inward soul; I will co-operate with you my members, invisibly by my Spirit; I will confer hidden blessings upon you, in all your obedience to my rules, and observance of my institutions; I will impart life and holiness to your souls. This only can God say; and Christ, the second person of the Divine Trinity, is, as God, the Head of his Church, in the exercise of these spiritual powers. "This is the covenant that I will make," saith the Lord, "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. For I will be merciful unto their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."[1] "It shall come to pass in the last days," saith

[1] Heb. viii. 10. 12.

God, "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh."[1] "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever."[2] "I in them, and thou in me," was our Saviour's prayer for his Church; let my Divine nature, He asks, be to them a source of life, and guidance, and truth. The members of Christ are, therefore, one body and one spirit:—one body as Christ is man, a real and discernible society, founded by Him while He lived among us in his tabernacle of flesh: one spirit as He is God, from Him as source and vital spring, deriving spiritual help and heavenly grace.

He is God and man conjoined.

But there is one step further to be taken in this our view of Christ as Head of his Church. Christ is both God and man, *unitedly*. He was wholly man, and also wholly God, yet not two but one Person. In like manner, Christ is Head of his Church at once spiritually and outwardly. His members, taken collectively, are one body and one spirit conjoined. He has not two Churches, one of which He has outwardly founded, the other He spiritually blesses: He who was both

[1] Acts ii. 16, 17. [2] John vi. 51.

God and man is one Head, and his members united unto Him both outwardly and spiritually are one Church. And hence, the privileges also resulting from its twofold nature must be looked for and expected as conjoined together. Whither did the Jews of old go to obtain spiritual food, but to Him who supplied them with the natural food? Whence did they obtain the unseen wonders of forgiveness of sins, but from Him whose power was manifested before their eyes in healing the sick in body? They who needed heavenly grace would go to the person of our Lord, they would seek Him in his human nature, and touch Him in his outward man. Thus in his mystical body, the Church, are to be sought the gifts and graces which the Redeemer of the world has to bestow upon all who in faith and humble penitence desire them. To it have the promises of his covenant been made, and we must seek them there; in the unity with the one body, in the observance of the duties which his covenant imposes upon us, in the assembling of ourselves together as He has commanded his disciples, in the prayers and sacraments and visible rites which he has enjoined. We must seek spiritual membership in the outward membership—spiritual grace in

the outward sign—spiritual communion in the outward communion—and thus shall we grow up into Him in all things who both as God and as man is the Head, even Christ. It will be by the exercise of faith that these things are fully understood. The Jews could turn away from the Son of God, and say, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" beholding no Divine beauty in Him that He should be desired. And we should act in the same manner with regard to his mystical body still on earth, and deem it nothing better than any other long established society, unless we have that faith of Peter which enabled him to say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

Summary.

Here then we may pause, having first briefly reviewed the line of argument which we have been pursuing. Our object has been to form in the mind a clear and distinct notion of what it is which ought to be understood as signified by the name of the Church of Christ. We began by defining it as the one society of believers which was founded on earth by Christ Jesus our Lord. Each of the points which this brief proposition contains,

have been separately established. It has been proved to consist of believers in the faith of the Gospel of Christ, and these believers to be incorporated and associated together into a certain society. The peculiar bond which constitutes the principle of unity in this society, we further ascertained to be its derivation and transmission from one origin; and that origin was ascribed to our Saviour Jesus Christ, who being man, and acting as man, founded upon earth a perpetual society, manifest before all men, and existing in external discernible form as any other society might exist; and being also at the same time God, hath made with it an everlasting covenant of salvation, and imparts his blessing in and by it to his faithful children.

Such is the Church of Christ; and as Christ founded but one society upon earth, this note of its origin is a clear and sufficient mark by which it is distinguished from all other societies whatsoever. The definition given is primarily the definition of the Church on earth; but forasmuch as the Church above and below form together but one body, we do in fact denote the whole, although we draw its distinguishing feature from one portion only, that with which

The Church in heaven and earth included in the Definition.

we are most acquainted. The entire Church of God; the general assembly of the first-born; all things gathered together in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth;[1] all those his creatures, be they angels or men, whom God has called out and enrolled into his one heavenly society, and made inheritors of the promise of his eternal kingdom; all this entire body with Christ their head, to whom is given a name which is above every other name, we may designate, (in reference to that part with which we are more immediately acquainted,) The Society of Believers, which in behalf of mankind was in mercy planted here on earth, by Christ Jesus our Lord.

[1] Eph. i. 10. Col. i. 20.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

THE ADVANTAGES AND DUTY OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

WE have now defined what is the Church of Christ; namely, that it is the society of believers which was founded upon earth by Christ Jesus our Lord. From the particulars which make up this definition we gather the great advantages which the Church holds out, and the duty which devolves on all who profess the name of Christ of being incorporated into it. Fellow-members in that Church, to whom especially I address myself in these pages, let me rather say, that from it we gather a knowledge of the privileges and blessings

which we have received, and are reminded of the extent of the loss which we should suffer if excluded from our union with Christ, or the benefits resulting from it.

I. Benefits which the Church affords as consisting of Believers.

In the first place, it has been seen that the Church consists of believers; in this particular, the Church affords us an advantage by linking us, as it were, in companionship with those of like faith and hope with ourselves. It places us among the number of those, with whom we may find the truest source of friendship and happiness, a kindred spirit. Here we may find examples, which, as followers of Christ, we may do well to imitate. Here we may mutually cheer and encourage one another in well-doing, according to the precept which St. Paul gives, "Comfort yourselves together, and edify one another." "Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

II. Benefits derived from the Church as a Society. 1. Union.

But all these advantages will appear especially strengthened and enforced, when we consider the Church as *a society* of believers. For the advantages of mere companionship are ratified and rendered obligatory when we are united together by compact, and when an actual polity

exists among us for the cherishing of that common faith and kindred spirit which render companionship acceptable. Instead of meeting together only because similarity of opinion makes each agreeable to the others, we are joined together by duty, and by fixed rules and obligations. Instead of being liable to the loss of our mutual connexion as soon as any small difference of opinion shall dissolve our relation, in the bond of a society we are still united, may still feel essentially one, may ever feel, as it were, drawn together towards reconciliation and love.

2. Means of worship.

The benefit of the Church as a society, is further apparent, as being hence an instrument of united worship. If Christians were not united in some society, there could be no systematic and regular assembling for common prayer. There must be some arrangement and consent; some concentration of directing judgment, in order to appoint its place, its modes, its forms. Thus, without a society, believers would lose one of the main and most delightful, as well as most profitable methods of testifying their common faith. They would lose the advantage of that elevation of desire and hope which a joint as-

sembly for presenting our petitions may reasonably inspire, and the encouragement which may be derived from the recollection that their prayers are not offered up alone, but in conjunction with the prayers of others of the servants of God. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

3. Discipline.

The discipline of its members is another advantage which, as a society, the Church is capable of affording. To reprove or to correct is in itself an ungrateful task; there is required the existence of some acknowledged authority, or reproof will neither be efficiently administered on the one side, nor received with due submission on the other. Now that mutual relation of parts which the nature of an organized body confers, supplies this authority; for a society must possess rulers and governors; and to these, in all matters connected with its general design, the rest are under obligation to respect and obey. The Church then as a Society, guided and directed by her bishops and presbyters, the pastors of the flock, has her form of discipline—a discipline to be exercised mainly in the correction of the lives and morals of her members, and in the disposing and reforming matters of outward

religious observance. She may pronounce her censures, and solemn admonitions, upon the reckless inconsiderate triflers, and other unworthy or profane persons whom she may find among her sons: she may impose acts of penance upon those who desire to notify their sorrow for their past offences, and for the scandal which they have brought upon the Church of Christ, or who seek to correct and bridle their sinful desires: she may pronounce her excommunication, either the lesser excommunication, excluding from the participation of the Holy Communion; or the greater excommunication, whereby the offender is likewise withheld from the society of believers, and all participation in the Church's assemblies and prayers. The right to exercise such powers she has as a Society; and their importance and use cannot be denied. They are directed personally to erring members, and thus bear down upon them with immediate application, which general admonitions often fail to do. And at the same time their benefits extend themselves to others also. By them may careless Christians be reminded of their danger; sinners among them be reclaimed; the faithful encouraged; the whole body preserved from evil con-

tagion; and the dignity of Christ's holy sacraments maintained. By them, before a world lying in wickedness, a witness is made of the righteousness of God's laws, and of his denunciations against sin. In a word, as the service for Ash-Wednesday expresses it, the offender is solemnly punished in this world by open shame or degradation, that his soul may be saved in the day of the Lord; and that others admonished by his example might be more afraid to offend.

4. Instruction. Again, the Church as a Society affords this advantage, that hereby is supplied a method for the instruction of its members. It is an organization of pastors and their flocks; and such an organization implies the relative duty of feeding and of receiving food. Without such an arrangement, we should have no security for the inculcating and explaining of the true faith of the Gospel, or any safeguard against gross ignorance. For if it were left to individual curiosity and earnestness, and men had to study and explore each for himself, to make inquiries, and search from men and from books, as to what was the faith of Christ, the labour, if not by all, at least by most would be found impracticable. Their other avocations

would prevent them from devoting sufficient time to these investigations, and only men of leisure and studious habits would be found, under any supposition, acquainted with the faith. Or, if it be said that it might be sufficiently handed down by the force of the general duty which devolves upon all parents to teach their children, and those who should come after them, it must be answered that even this would not of itself effect the object which is desired. Christianity would then be divided, as religion was among the heathen of old, into distinct family religions; it would be a means of creating and maintaining family distinctions, and we should lose the benefit derived from the great bond of Christian unity, our common fraternity in the one Catholic family of Christ. Or perhaps, again, it may be argued that private zeal and the benevolent desire of doing and imparting good in the heart of earnest Christians, might suffice for affording enlightenment to their benighted neighbours, without any organization of a church, with its pastors and flocks committed to their care. But such labours must in a great degree prove weak and of comparatively little effect from the want of united effort, and a general design. All great projects and undertakings, requiring permanent care and

attention, are ordinarily committed into the hands of a body, that the energies of many may be concentrated and brought to bear together: and if the religious elevation and enlightenment of our fellow-creatures is a work of this kind and one of such importance as to claim the full powers of man to be exercised in it, it not less needs the acknowledged benefits of mutual co-operation and combination. And indeed, who can tell how soon individual zeal may give way? perhaps in one age the excitement of contending parties gives rise to teachers innumerable; men strive to be teachers even where they ought to be learners; and all are eager to hear some novel or more startling instructor. And then again, the stream sets with equal violence against the opposite bank; the strained bow flies back in the contrary direction to that in which it was just before strained; and few care to teach, and few to hear. There can be no stable, systematic, uncontroversial teaching, able to stand against the eddies of passing opinion, except as maintained by the organization of some actual society, in which teacher and taught are combined, and their mutual relation definitely marked out. Such teaching depends not solely on the excitement of controversy, and therefore is more like-

ly to be deep, and practical, and sincere; it has a momentum or force of its own, which carries it safely over obstacles, which compensates in some degree for the deficiencies of its ministers, and renders it less dependent on the mere approbation and consent of the hearers.

III. Benefits which the Church affords as being one.

But let us proceed to notice the further benefits which the Church affords on the ground of its unity—as being one society—one by that principle of continuity and succession which has been shown in the former part to be essentially the oneness of the Church. Not now to refer to the enlarged feeling of brotherhood and union which this connexion is calculated to engender toward fellow-believers throughout the world, it will be found an important security for the preservation and perpetuity of the faith in its truth and purity. Man has but a little day upon the earth, and individually he can boast nothing of any perpetuity here. He is subject to change and decay in himself, and with him all his thoughts perish. But as he beholds the power of natural reproduction constantly going on in his species, so he is led to look to a similar method for the preservation of the principles of truth which he prizes as dearly, perhaps, as him-

self. He commits them to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also: he founds a line of transmission and reproduction, so that each generation, when they have reached the end of their stage, passes on to others that which has been committed to them. He can establish no other system of keeping the truth alive on the earth, or by which change and corruption may be more effectually checked or detected. And the utility of this method is acknowledged by all, because it is universally adopted. As the Church, by her constitution acts, so we find other societies act, not only such as aim at establishing themselves permanently as instructors and guides to the people in religion, but those moreover whose object is the preservation of science, or learning, or art, or which are established for other purposes of general utility. A society would not be deemed perfect unless it possessed some established system for securing its continuance after the removal by death of its original members. Its constitution must require that new members be from time to time admitted under the authority of their predecessors to maintain, as it were, and perpetuate the life of the society; and that new rulers and teachers be approved and authorized and commissioned by

those who have themselves been approved and authorized and commissioned, who may carry forward the administration of affairs. And all this is done, not merely that they may be preserved as a society from generation to generation, but that with their own they might gain perpetuity also for the ends and objects for which they have been incorporated in their purity and integrity. Now it cannot be that this economy should be of less utility in the Church than it is as exercised by any other body. It will not, indeed, afford sufficient ground for inferring that this or that individual teacher of the Church is necessarily free from error, or that the entire Church of any particular country maintains the truth of the Gospel. On the contrary, we know how Churches and duly constituted ministers may err in many points both of faith and practice, and that without God's especial blessing they will thus err: but humanly speaking, this provision is the security we possess that the truth may be preserved; and without the use of the means with which we have been entrusted, we cannot expect the end to be attained. Thus, if we reject the notion of the Church's oneness, and admit that the Church consists of any number of uncombined societies or congregations of

believers, it is manifest that we lose all that security which the Church in her true character most certainly affords. If, as it is often asserted, whoever converts a number of heathens, or collects together a congregation of Christians, and thus acquires a kind of oversight conceded to him, is thereby constituted a pastor, and his flock an integral portion of the Church of Christ: then, the essential unity of the Church being gone, the benefit which might be derived from it in the way of preservation of the truth is gone also. For such a teacher comes with no proof of his commission, and can afford no probable evidence that his doctrine is not some novelty of his own. Afterwards, indeed, he may point to his success in the number of his converts and disciples, and may appeal to their character as the evidence of the truth and soundness of his instructions. But this comes too late; he needed his credentials before his disciples were gained; he needed them as the authority upon which he should begin to act. And now that they have become his disciples, the appeal to them may avail so far as this, it proves that he is not peculiar in his opinions—that certain reasons may be urged which may render them to others apparently true, and of sufficient importance to be openly professed;

but that they are not new doctrines, that they are not after all erroneous doctrines, the appeal cannot prove. Any man endued with some share of natural talent may rise up and gain over a body of followers, but the doctrine which he delivers may be his own invention, and his creed not that of the Church; while, with regard to the character of his adherents, it must be remembered that to a certain extent a party may exhibit many tokens of godliness and virtue, and yet be involved in great and serious errors.

But whatever weight of evidence, in favour of any doctrine, we might be willing to concede as belonging to the number and character of the converts, still this cannot justify us in a matter so important as religious truth, in neglecting or despising any *other* evidence, if any other may be obtained. The reasonable man has a right to say, If you bring a new revelation, confirm it by miracles; if you bring an old revelation, whom can you name as your vouchers, that what you had yourself learned, you sufficiently understood to be able to impart it to others, themselves being authorised to commission you? Such is the test which the organization of the one Church supplies. Her pastors come not in their own name. They have been examined and ordained for their holy functions by those who have been

themselves duly appointed to that office. Here she places within our reach the means of proving and preserving the truth; and though they may not in particular cases effectually fulfil their design, yet men are not wont, in ordinary things, to neglect the means they have on account of occasional want of success. We must prize the continued perpetuity of the Church as the instrument and the perpetuity of the truth. Her successive oneness is the security we have against novelty of doctrine. Hereby has she been able to hand down the creeds and doctrines of early times; and hereby, from generation to generation, has she stood forth as the guardian and witness of the Holy Scriptures; and in her future perpetuity we may look for the continuance of these inestimable benefits.

Hitherto we have been considering only those benefits which the Church affords in her general character as *one society of believers:* benefits which, in different degrees, may belong to other institutions, in their outward character of a similar nature with the Church. But when we come to those particulars in which the Church stands distinct from all other institutions, and whereby it is specially defined, then we may expect to discover benefits and advantages which are peculiarly its own.

IV. Benefits which the Church affords as having its origin in Christ.

The Church is distinguished from all other societies in being in one unbroken continuance *up to the time of those great events, recorded in Gospel history, which it commemorates.* It is one, through all past generations, up to the revelation of the faith by Christ Jesus our Lord. It was founded when the facts upon which it is based were before the eyes and observations of every one; and it spread itself through the world, from the very spot where those facts took place. It thus affords no small evidence to the truths which it teaches. Imagine that the Church of the present day had been first combined into a body long subsequently to the life and resurrection of our Saviour, and the commission which He delivered to his Apostles—that is, suppose it had not been one society from the very first, but an institution of later times. In this case the unbeliever would have a fair ground of objection against the Christian faith. He would plausibly urge that it would be no difficult thing for ingenious men to have worked up a few old acknowledged facts, or vague traditionary reports, and to have grounded upon them many falsehoods and forgeries, which then would pass

undetected under cover of much which had formerly been received. But at the period when the facts actually took place this could not be. At that particular time unmixed truth would be essential to the success of its institution. Forgeries, however artfully interwoven, could not possibly have escaped detection. And, therefore, since the Church was then successfully instituted, the events to which it bears witness must unquestionably be true. The great substitute which we have for the eye-witness to the facts themselves, is the eye-witness to the institution to which those facts at the time gave rise. The Church is a standing memorial, an historical document, as it were, and witness of the truth of the Gospel narrative, just as the dispersion of the Jews over the whole world is a still continuing proof of the truth of that remarkable dispensation recorded in the Old Testament, under which they were placed. It is both the pillar, and also the ground of truth; for while as a pillar it upholds and publishes, and secures the truth; as "the ground," it is the evidence and proof upon which we receive it.

But the Church, one in continual succession up to the time to which we have ascribed it,

was also the *actual institution of Christ.* It was founded by Him, who, although bearing the form of a servant, and the likeness of man, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, whom God hath now again highly exalted, and hath set at his own right hand in heavenly places, having put all things under his feet. Here we ground the pre-eminent advantages which the Church claims to afford. If benefits, many and great, may be found in the wise regulations and well-designed institutions of men like ourselves, shall we not reasonably expect yet higher benefits in the institution of the God-man? May we not justly infer that this institution shall not only possess a superior degree of excellence in those respects in which ordinary societies may be found useful, but shall also furnish more excellent blessings and advantages of its own? Is the Church, in a natural and merely human point of view, as any other society might be, a valuable expedient for the perpetuity and continuance of the truths which she teaches?—under its divine Head we receive an additional security that this important object shall not be frustrated, for He has said, "Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." Again: Is the Church,

considering it as a mere society, an instrument adapted by its organization for imparting instruction and consolation to its members?—her ministers can now enforce their message by saying, "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us." Does the Church, in her external constitution, supply the means of discipline? That discipline is rendered more solemn, its authority of more weight, by being under the sanction of God Himself. "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Does the Church, as a mere society, afford the opportunity of united worship? As a body founded by Christ, in whose name our prayers are addressed to God, by whose merits alone they are accepted, we have especial ground for believing that its supplications shall not be offered in vain. And has the Church her bonds of union and fraternity in her outward sacraments? These, as the institution of Christ Himself, as perpetual ordinances from God to man, acquire new dignity and virtues; they become the pledges and instruments of spiritual union and communion with the Church at large, and with the Triune God. Thus, while

instruction and discipline, and common assemblings and badges of union, may be advantages gained and enjoyed by other societies externally of a similar character, none can place their instruction, their discipline, their religious meetings, their badges of union, on a par with those of the Church, because the Church alone has been founded by Christ. For no body of men can possess more authority or endowments than those who have founded it. Human founders, whatever they may devise that is good and useful, cannot confer more than human gifts and this world's advantages. But whatever man can offer that is advantageous in the profession of a common faith, that surely can Christ offer, who was perfect man, while as God He was to bestow upon his institution blessings and privileges and gifts, which no human power can control. The truest happiness, in the sense of the forgiveness and love of God, and peace of mind which passeth all understanding, union with God, and communion, or participation and fellowship in his divine nature, grace here, and glory hereafter; these are some of the gifts which He has the power and will to bestow, who has come down to earth and built here a church of living stones, found-

ing it upon apostles and prophets, and securing it on Himself as the corner-stone.

Duty of membership.

Now it is on these advantages and blessings which the Church of Christ affords, that we ground and justify our own adherence to it, and are induced to call upon the world at large to join it also. The single reflection, that He who has founded it is our Lord and Saviour, He from whom our hopes descend, and through whom our worship is directed to Heaven, must be sufficient to enforce the duty, and prove the obligations we are under to be members of his Church. The Church, it is true, is a voluntary society. It is not founded by war and violence; it does not stand by the arm of the civil power, nor does it need to be protected by the terrors of human law. We are not forced to join it, or to continue in it against our will. But as instituted by our Lord and Saviour, there is a high moral obligation to belong to it: and to those who do belong to it the same ground affords a high moral obligation to adhere to its order and regulations. For although, as just stated, the Church is a voluntary society, yet this does not mean that it may be obeyed or disregarded at will:

its authority is nothing which proceeds from its constituted members, its authority is one which it has received from its Head, and which man can neither give nor take away. The joining the Church is not the assigning and making over to her ministers a certain power over ourselves, but an acknowledgment of an authority and commission which they have received as the guides and pastors of the Church.

Membership in the Church may be lost.

And if so great are the blessings and benefits arising from the Church, and so great our obligation to belong, as members, to its sacred company, we, who are already within its pale, do well with zealous care to guard our privileges in the unity of the Church, and to fear to lose them. For these are benefits which may be lost. The unity or oneness of the Church cannot itself be broken, but we may be broken off from that unity, and cease to be of that one Church. The Spirit may take its flight, its quickening warmth and life be quenched, and the branch which was once grafted in be left dead and lost. And if the Spirit be wholly withdrawn, then membership in the Church must altogether and for ever cease.[1]

[1] 1 Thess. v. 19. Heb. vi. 4—6.

Such a fearful state we know may, and does exist, but *where* no man may presume to pronounce. Of this awful state of perdition and reprobation of those from whom the Spirit has once and for ever removed, it is not within the power even of the Church to declare that it is the state of any individual. All she can declare is, that the state may be; but of whom it is the condition, at least while life may last, knoweth no man. The open and professed apostate might seem, indeed, to be thus lost, but so long as there is life, so long may we hope that the apostate may return; and that return would imply that spiritual life still remained, that his privileges were not wholly forfeited. The Spirit strives long with man, and if he return and rise again, it must still be the Spirit's work. Hence it has always been held by the Church that baptism cannot be repeated. If peace and reconciliation is again sought by one who has been estranged from her, that act may be taken as proof that he may still be accounted in the unity of the Church, without a fresh admission into it by the sacrament of baptism.

The benefits of the Church may be withheld from its members,

But although we cannot declare of any that the privileges which he has received, as member of the Church of Christ, are wholly and for ever

lost, that though he was once in the unity of the Church, he is now no longer there, yet we are often by certain outward signs able to discover cases in which, though a man may still be in the Church, and in covenant-right to his Christian privileges, he manifestly neither enjoys them nor partakes of them.

Now these external signs or marks are to be drawn from the definition given of the Church of Christ. In that definition are included the main essentials which must outwardly distinguish its members, namely, *profession of faith*, and *union in the one society of Christ's institution.* Now if in either of these points there is found in any individual baptized into the Church an acknowledged deficiency, then we may infer, not indeed that he ceases to be of the Church, but that he ceases to enjoy the privileges to which as member he is entitled. Hence we lay down as manifestly involving a loss of Church privileges,—

Open apostacy from the Christian faith.

Separation from the society of the Church of Christ, either by excommunication, or by an open and voluntary withdrawal from her communion.

through their apostacy.

The first of these will not, perhaps, suggest any difficulty or objection. How can *he* be deemed benefited by the covenant which God made with him in baptism, who has by open declaration and voluntary renunciation professed himself a disbeliever? He was made partaker of the Church's blessings upon "the answer of a good conscience towards God," and upon his open renunciation of his Saviour we may surely declare those blessings withheld. The promise is, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," but no sacrament of baptism is spoken of as of any efficacy or avail in the curse which follows, "He that believeth not shall be damned."

We have stated the case thus strongly, because we can only take the general sentence of the unbeliever on himself, and decide by his open and unqualified admission. We have no right to receive any other judgment. Ourselves, however, we may judge more stringently. We need not wait for open evidence before men, of our want of faith, in order to infer that we come short of the blessings to which we have been called. We cannot be partakers of the blessings of the Church, if the creed of the Church is not our creed; if we do not live a

life of faith, and obey God in a faithful spirit. The word does not profit when not mixed with faith in them that hear; the communion of prayer or of sacrament is ineffectual and dead, and brings no help and sustenance to the unbelieving soul.

By excommunication,

The second case which (in various degrees) manifestly involves the loss of Church privileges, is the Church's act of *excommunication.* For, being a society, its officers have the authority of withholding its sacraments and outward privileges from unworthy members. The Church does not, indeed, as has been already stated, reverse baptism, for then the offender, so cut off, and, as it were, ungrafted, could never again be restored. He would need admission by a second baptism, and it is the doctrine of the Church, founded upon Scripture, that baptism cannot be repeated.[1] In common language, indeed, the excommunicated person is sometimes said to be cut off from the unity of the Church; but this expression is to be understood as implying a separation, not from the essential oneness of the Church of Christ, but from the state of

[1] Eph. iv. 5. Nicene Creed.

union or unitedness, which its faithful members are bound to maintain, and from the privilege of uniting with them in holy worship. A son disinherited, and cast out from his father's family, is no longer in a state of friendly intercourse with the other members, and forfeits his share of the dignity and wealth of the family, but he retains the bond of birth and blood which unites him with them still. And thus the Church does not strictly cut off the offender from the membership to which he has once been admitted, but from the use and enjoyment of it, and the privileges it otherwise entitles him to. As the name implies, excommunication is simply the prohibition from communion, which may be either in the Holy Eucharist alone, or altogether in the prayers and society of the faithful; we cannot go further and say, it cuts him off wholly from the one Church. Now, if it is a high privilege to be made a member of the Church, it must be deemed proportionally a heavy loss to be placed beneath its ban. These are the corresponding exercises of power for blessing or for punishment with which its officers have been intrusted; and if we deny the terrors of excommunication, we deny the benefits to which we were admitted in

baptism. The same ministers who are commissioned to receive into the Church, are by the same authority commissioned also to withhold from its communion, and its members, as they are sensible of the true nature of their society, will respect and reverence the execution of its solemn discipline.

Thirdly: an open and voluntary act of separation from the society of Christ's Church must be considered as equally involving the loss of the privileges which the Church conveys. Admission into the Church requires conjointly the profession of faith and also association in Christ's society; and this twofold idea of the Church must lead us to infer that Church privileges are lost not only by the rejection of the faith, but also by the separation from the society. If that separation is the act of the Church, it is called excommunication, which we have already considered; but it may also take place by the act of the individual who separates, and it is this which comes now before our notice.

through their separation of themselves from her communion.

In judging ourselves individually, the separation must be deemed to consist in any neglect of Church order and Church communion, with-

out sufficient reason. Such neglect, then, must be considered to involve, according to its degree, the loss of many of the benefits, natural and spiritual, to which by our new birthright we have been admitted; and argues insensibility to the blessings belonging to our covenant state. Our present design, however, is rather to consider the Church, as it may be seen and judged of in the case of men in general. We must base our judgment, therefore, on plain and acknowledged facts, and the separation from the society of the Church must be an overt-act on the part of the individual before we can deem him to have forfeited, for the time, the enjoyment of baptismal privileges.

Now an overt-act, whereby the Church is renounced, is plainly the setting up, or the joining a society, which, not being one with the Church, by lawful succession from the founder, Christ, yet claims to be regarded as if it were a portion of the Church of Christ. It may be like the Church in many, perhaps in all its outward characteristics: it may be desirous of avoiding any thing like rivalry or hostility towards those who do not belong to it, but it cannot in truth be a church, because destitute of the essential principle of unity: it has a different founder, and a

different beginning. It is a new society, and it is no more possible for a man to form a wholly new independent society, which shall be part of the Church, than it is for any in the present day to compose a poem which shall be part of the works of Homer. And if such a society be, notwithstanding, regarded by its members as if it were a church; if it be regarded as the appointed instrument for religious instruction and the means of spiritual grace: if it be placed for and in the stead of the Church, having its own separate assemblies, its own separate sacraments, its own separate ministers, all in the place of the assemblies and sacraments and ministers of the Church, claiming the same spiritual office and authority, then the joining it must be a virtual renunciation of the true Church. For we cannot profess two faiths, or belong, as it were, to two churches. If the new one claims to answer all the ends of the old one, it comes not as a subsidiary, but as a substitute; not to be added to it, but to be taken in exchange; and those who make the exchange acquire whatever benefit the new society is capable of affording; they cannot retain the benefits of the society which they resign in its favour.

From what has now been said respecting com-

munities for Christian worship not in the unity of the Church, it may not be inferred that their members have ceased altogether to be members of the Church. On the contrary, (as it has already been stated) it is wholly out of the power of man to pass so heavy a sentence upon any individual: and we know that so long as life may last, the privileges to which baptism has conferred the title, though they may have been long neglected and withheld, may by God's grace be again restored. We must still, therefore, account them within the pale of the Church, if they have been validly received into it by the sacrament of baptism. But on the other hand, because the individuals composing these religious communities are allowed to be members of Christ's Church, we cannot infer from this that therefore their society is in the unity of the Church. They may be individually of the Church, but at the same time the body which they constitute for the purpose of religious worship and discipline, may be no part of the Church. These distinctions are important, and it will be useful to make them plain by an illustration or two. Thus, a club might consist wholly of members of parliament, but it would not consequently be a parliament. They might meet, perhaps,

for deliberation on the affairs of the country, they might conduct business precisely as business is conducted in the house of commons, but still they are no parliament, and their acts of no real authority in the state. Again, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, or that for Promoting Christian Knowledge, we may reasonably assume are societies composed entirely of members of the Church of Christ; but this circumstance of the character and faith of their members does not make those societies *parts of the Church.* Nor again, (reversing the argument) because these societies are no parts of the Church of Christ, are we to infer that their members are not members of the Church? They are societies of Church people, but not churches; and they aim at fulfilling their important objects, the extending of the Redeemer's kingdom, without claiming to be more than human societies. These illustrations, applied to the case before us, will serve to show that to be a Church-member, and at the same time member of a society which is not a church, is nothing inconsistent or contradictory. It is absurd to argue, that because the members of a religious community are Christians, and have been baptized into the Church, therefore their community is a Church;

and if we say that their society is not a Church, it is equally unreasonable to infer that we deny that those who belong to it are Church-members.

To return from this digression, let it be clearly understood what it is which we have stated to be a declaration or overt-act of separation from the communion of the Church of Christ. To make or found a society is a measure which any man is justified in doing, provided the object it has in view, and the means to be pursued, are lawful and good. There is nothing in the obligation of Church membership which interferes with this; on the contrary, it may often be a method by which Christian benevolence and kindness may be most beneficially exercised. That which is here condemned, is the originating or joining any society in the place of, and instead of, the Church; a society which claims to be a Church, although it had not its beginning as a society from our Lord. The error is not in the founding of a society, but in its false title and claims, as we should condemn such a club as we just now imagined, not because it consisted of members of parliament, but if it usurped the prerogatives and powers of parliament, without being duly summoned and authorized according to the constitution of the

country. No society can justly take to itself the name of Church, unless "the Lord" is the beginner and founder. But if that name be by any body of men unjustly usurped, it thereby claims to itself, though of earthly origin, powers and attributes which a divine founder only can communicate. It casts dishonour, often unwillingly indeed, upon Him in whom we trust, even while, perhaps, it most desires to honour him. It thrusts out the Church, to place itself in its room; and can we doubt, but that with the Church it rejects and forfeits the Church's blessing also? It was in this way that Wesley viewed the subject, when he earnestly forbade his followers to apply to his society the designation of "Church." Individually, he knew, they had been admitted into Christ's family; but how could that be a portion of the Church, or those assemblies of the Church, which he felt that he himself on his own judgment had originated? However pure the doctrines of his society, however perfect its discipline, however edifying its mode of worship, still he dared not place it in the room of Christ's institution, he dared not make it a substitute for the Church, or call it by the Church's name.

Perhaps, some of my readers may have heard

it said, It is the duty of every one who desires faithfully to serve God to join some religious community. First, let me remind them in reply, that they have already joined a religious community in the holy Catholic Church, if indeed they are baptized. But they mean, that it is the duty of every one to join some religious community in the way of actual participation or communion with them in worship and sacraments; and, in this sense, I cordially join in saying that such is indeed the duty of every one. But can there be any doubt what religious community that must be which they join? Shall it not be that one community founded by our Redeemer, and blessed by his divine blessing? It is the duty of every one who has been called to the knowledge of God's grace and faith in Christ, to join his Church's communion, and aiming in all things to preserve the peace and concord of his Church on earth, to serve and honour him in it as his own institution. Without this, none can expect to enjoy its privileges, and partake of its blessings. In neglecting his institution we neglect Christ, who in his wisdom has seen it needful to appoint it for our use. Let us put, by way of illustration, a similar case. God has given us his

revealed will, that by it we may guide our lives aright; and the possession of it may indeed be looked upon as a treasure. But can we be at all the richer for it, if we never use it; and do we not neglect God, in neglecting his Word? Without it we might have reasonably searched out ourselves some standard of instruction, though it were only the work of man; but if with the gift of the Bible in our hands, we take human guides, not to explain it, but as substitutes for it; if we call them our Bible, and say, "whatever is good must be God's word"—"it matters not what religious book we adopt, so as we learn the way of salvation;" do we not by all this undervalue God's gifts, and openly and before the eyes of all men deprive ourselves of the benefit He had designed it should convey? And so, if God had only called to us from heaven, and invited us generally to be followers of Him, but left us to find out for ourselves the way to serve Him here, we might be doing well in planning out our own different schemes, and unions, and methods, and joining whatever party seemed to us best able to help us forward. But if He has left his throne on high, and comes down as man, and forms on earth his own society, and says, In this my

family you must prepare yourselves for the inheritance I am making for you hereafter, and here you may receive my assistance and grace, then must we joyfully receive his appointed method, and the society which he has seen it good to create. There must be no indifference when God has fixed a plan; we must not seek out for ourselves earthly props and human helps, and place them in the stead of the help which He has ordained. Christ has said, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me: and shall we deem it matters little whom we receive? Christ has bid us be of one body: shall we say, we will choose our own companions, and form our own "Church?" Christ, as it were, has said, "This is the way, walk ye in it;" and shall we say, "It matters nothing which road we take, so as we reach heaven at last?"—No, we dare not. We cannot escape this conclusion:—if we neglect or despise that institution which Christ came down to earth to establish, we deprive ourselves of its inestimable benefits, and as far as in us lies, diminish and weaken its utility to mankind in general. We manifest this neglect, by joining another society in the place of it; we openly

dishonour God and our Saviour, by esteeming man's work as equal with his, and presuming to prefer the advantages which may arise from a human society to those which can exist only in the Church of Christ.

And now our responsibility is before us. If we have been received into Christ's Church, and if we prize that admission as a privilege of incalculable value, as a pledge of grace here, and of glory hereafter; then let us earnestly hold fast what we have received, that no man take our crown.

We have a faith to maintain, in its integrity, in its sincerity, in its holy fruits and graces.

We have to preserve all the attributes and characteristics of a society, subordination and discipline, and assembling of ourselves together, and holy communion and brotherly love.

We have to maintain this subordination and concord in the one society, which our Lord has founded for the whole world, where He has recorded his name, and will come unto us and bless us.

These are the duties to be observed by those who, feeling the great benefits of the Church, both to themselves and the world at large, desire that the good-will of God to man may not

be frustrated by them. And thus entitled to the Gospel promises, in the full enjoyment of the means of grace, in union with the saints in Heaven and in earth, and with God Himself, his living members shall grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ; and hereafter with his whole family in Heaven and earth be presented to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but holy and without blemish.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER, AS RESULTING FROM THE KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS.

THERE is a very striking passage in the first chapter of the book of Isaiah, in which the Lord expostulates with the children of Israel for their forgetfulness of Him and of his covenant. "The ox (He says) knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." He had chosen them as his peculiar people, He had exhibited wonderful manifestations of his immediate care and guardianship over them: He had given them laws, and made with them especial covenants of mercy. They had perpetual proofs and memorials of these things in their historical records, in their religious services, in their priesthood, in their prophets; and yet, notwithstanding all, they were insensi-

ble to their covenant state. They did not, as Moses had admonished them, from all the tokens which God had given them, "know and consider it in their hearts that the Lord he is God, there is none else." They forgat that God was their Saviour, the Most High God their Redeemer. They retained no sense of the high relation with God in which they had been placed; no recollection of his covenant. They were God's children, but without the feeling in their hearts of being his children, and of his being their Father. They were God's people, but without the conviction of being his covenant-people on their minds, moving them to love and obedience, and filling their hearts with thankfulness and praise. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel considered not, and knew not, that they were purchased by a heavenly Lord, and daily fed by his hand.

Such neglect was in itself a sin involving them in the heaviest guilt. For, not to describe it in its full heinousness, but to bring it down to the level of an offence against a fellow-creature, it was a display of the deepest ingratitude. The offence which we are apt to look upon as above all others contemptible, and unworthy

even when shown towards men, that they were guilty of before God. But the evil did not stop here. From not "knowing and considering" diligently their state and relation with God, they came to rebel against Him also. The prophet describes them as a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters, who have forsaken the Lord, and provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger.[1] And if we turn to the book of Chronicles, and read the account of the nation at the period at which Isaiah writes, we find how true the description was. Isaiah began to prophesy in the time of Uzziah, Jotham, and Ahaz; and of the first of these it is recorded that he transgressed against the Lord, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense instead of the appointed priests:[2] in the time of Jotham, "the people did corruptly:"[3] and Ahaz "made images for Baalim, . . . and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen."[4] Thus was "their land full of idols:"—and if heathen nations over whom God ruled perhaps by the agency of others

[1] Isa. i. 4.
[2] 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—20.
[3] 2 Chron. xxvii. 2.
[4] 2 Chron. xxviii. 2, 3.

alone, and less immediately by Himself, were accounted sinful and profane by idolatry, how much more must they have been so esteemed over whom Jehovah declares Himself a present King, and to whom the same angels minister as attend also around his throne! Such were the sad consequences of apostacy and depravity into which the people of Israel had been led by their forgetfulness of their covenant state. And God, in the solemn expostulation to which we have already referred, condescends to set their sin before them in this light, as resulting immediately from such insensibility. "I have nourished (He says) and brought up children, but they have rebelled against me; for, though the ox knoweth his owner, the ass his master's crib, yet Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."

And will not God upbraid us in the same manner as He upbraids Israel, if we live insensible of our covenant state? For the kingdom of God as revealed in the Christian dispensation, is as truly a state of promise and covenant as that which the Jews enjoyed. It is a new covenant, but, like the former, it is one in which Jehovah declares, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." It

differs only in that it is one more fully delivered and more widely extended. For it reveals the whole counsel of God, which before had been but faintly shadowed; and whereas the former had been limited to a single nation, yet now is fulfilled the prophecy, "I will call them my people which were not my people, and her beloved which was not beloved:" so that Gentiles who are by nature and blood aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant made to them, are become fellow-citizens in God's kingdom, and members of his household. And thus we, like Israel of old, have been admitted into covenant with God, and have been made a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. We have been purchased from condemnation, and placed under the guardianship and headship of God—enrolled into his family by the seal of baptism, and made members of his mystical body. These are our privileges and our heavenly calling; and how can we escape God's remonstrance—how can we escape being reproved by the ox and the ass, by the very brutes whom God has placed so far below us in capacities and in nature, if we know not nor consider these our heavenly

relations, and the duties which depend upon them?

In order to "know" them, and to be able to act upon them as we ought, we must "consider" them. We must by serious reflection fix in our minds a constant sense of our privileges as members of the Church of Christ; the recollection that we are God's people, and the sheep of his pasture; for by this Church feeling we may become more alive to our duties in the Church, and more desirous to show forth his praises, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.

To this end we shall in this chapter endeavour to enumerate some of the points in which this sense of our position, as members of the Church, may especially be manifested; distinguishing it, as it were, according to its various aspects as it relates more especially to God, or to our brethren, or to ourselves individually.

1. Piety the result of Church feeling.

The first and principal of these—the one which may in some degree be considered to include all—is the sense that God Most High is a God in covenant-relation to us. This covenant-relation is of the very essence of the Church; and, therefore, if we rightly know and consider what it

is to be in the Church, we shall know and consider our covenant with God. It will be the result of our Church feeling to view God as a reconciled Father in Christ Jesus, and to be sensible that there is vouchsafed to us in the covenant union which He has made, a mystical union with God, and an opportunity of communion or participation in his heavenly grace. And how intimately will this affect the whole of the life and character! God has become our God, and we his peculiar people. How can we bow down to any other god, or how can we fly to any other mediator, than to Him who has made us his? We need no longer attempt to hide ourselves from God, as our first parents after their fall. We need not fear Him with the coward fear of a slave, or tremble before Him as before a tyrant. We may love Him because He hath first loved us. Our whole religion may become elevated and purified into piety. Our prayers may be offered up as to a Friend and Father, who, by that sacred parental tie, stands pledged to give good things to those of his sons who ask Him. Our services of obedience and good works may be rendered under the encouraging conviction that He vouchsafes to receive them and to approve

of them, and worthless as they are, not only to Him, but in themselves, to reward them for his covenant's sake.

2. Humility.

And hence, humility may be added as another feature in which Church feeling, properly cultivated, will naturally manifest itself. For it will not be possible to magnify God for his mercies as our especial Redeemer and great Benefactor, and at the same time very highly to exalt ourselves. The example of the Israelites will best illustrate this. God fed thee in the wilderness (says Moses) with manna, which thy fathers knew not; and the reason assigned is, *that He might humble thee*. And he warns them, lest forgetting the Lord their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage, they should ever say in their heart, "My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth." It was a difficult thing, doubtless, for the tribes of Israel to effect great victories over the various nations who opposed them, and yet to ascribe nothing to themselves except as the agents of another; yet this they would do, if they fully remembered the Lord their God, who gave them power to get wealth, that He might establish the covenant which He sware to their fathers. And it is a

difficult thing to be a faithful and obedient soldier of Christ, and yet to lay no claim to merit on that account, and to trust that all services done and suffered for Him will be accepted through the same Redeemer, as the Israelites' arms were rendered victorious by the power of Jehovah. Yet who can doubt but that this grace of humility may be attained unto by diligently keeping in mind the covenant of our God?

And this feature of humility will be found to be no less the natural result of Church feeling, as leading us to consider the nature of our title to God's covenant. There is nothing in that covenant which can lead any one to presumption or arrogance of heart, as if some especial favour had been shown to himself, or some individual excellence had obtained an exclusive privilege. Indeed, if a man should presume to suppose that God had made with him an especial covenant, what evidence could he adduce? All God's covenants of old, as for example with Noah or Abraham, were made with such external solemnities, as corresponded to the greatness of the occasion, and with such outward signs as might leave no doubt on the mind of those with whom they were made. And unless a man can advance like proofs, he has no evi-

dence which ought to satisfy him, none certainly which would justify him in claiming from another a belief in his assertions. God's only covenant now made with man, is made in common with his whole Church. It is not a covenant of private contract. It is made, indeed, personally with each, but not to any one particularly above the rest, not to any singly or separately. And therefore, whatsoever promise of salvation and encouragement to well-doing each individual may enjoy, that promise or encouragement is his only as member of the Church of Christ, the society unto whom the covenant was vouchsafed. We are placed in a vast body, and the dignity of each consists in the combination of all. Thus the individual is in a measure merged in the society: we are taught to forget ourselves while we contemplate the fabric of which we form a part. If the alliance with glorified saints, and martyrs, and apostles be ennobling, yet this cannot raise the sordid pride of self-esteem. We find no personal distinctions which exalt us over the rest, for we view the whole but as one body, and its honours and privileges as partaken in common.

Nor is presumption fostered, as if in God's covenant we were secure. As we bar not God's

hand, but confess that of the very stones He is able to raise up children to Abraham, so neither do we dare to bind his power from executing just judgment on the unworthy members of his Church. He calls and He rejects with the same unerring justice. There are branches in the vine which must be cast into the fire and burned;[1] and in connexion with a similar illustration St. Paul admonishes us, "Be not high-minded, but fear." May we not then from all these considerations infer, that the more, as God's true Israel, we rightly understand our covenant state, the more will there be promoted within us the grace of Christian humility, and due moderation in estimating ourselves?

3. Subordination.

Again, subordination will be another result of Church feeling. The very idea of a society implies a certain subordination in those matters to which the society has reference; and all who are members of any society do virtually acknowledge themselves in a state of dependency or relation one to another, for the superior benefits resulting from which, they have foregone whatever advantages might be looked for in a state of separation and disorganization. It is, therefore, the first principle of

[1] John xv.

a society, that they possess their own rules and orders, and their proper officers to administer them; and a manifest obligation lies upon its members to act in conformity to those rules, and in reasonable subjection to their corporate rulers.

Now the Church, we know, is a society; its specific reference being to matters of religious teaching, and discipline, and worship, and sacraments. To be sensible, then, that we belong to such a society, must carry with it the conviction of a required subordination in these particulars. For the notion of the Church as a society is lost, when we reject the existence of an authority therein; when we lose sight of the necessity, on the one hand, of the duty and responsibility of its rulers; on the other hand, of the obligation of submission and deference in the governed. And this subordination is demanded by the *benefits* which the Church, as a society, is designed to procure, and on account of which we profess ourselves its members. We cannot reasonably expect to participate in these, except as carrying out its true character as a body corporate; so that the more these benefits are felt and understood, and their importance appreciated, the more we shall endeavour to adhere to its

rules, to take warning by its censures, and to guide ourselves by its allowed authority.

This subordination to the Church must practically exhibit itself, where it is chiefly called for, in the dutiful attachment to our own branch of it, in the desire to preserve it unimpaired by any division of communion. But at the same time, although manifested only in one particular portion of the Church, it must spring from the more comprehensive principle of respect to the whole. Many persons, perhaps, feel their obligation to Church order, and exhibit it practically in their particular communion, and to their own particular clergymen, without feeling this full force of the general obligation. They feel it as due to the local church, instead of to the one universal body; and hence they consider it as no more than the subordination required to any other society relating to other matters, to which they may belong. But let our Church feeling direct us to view the Church as a whole, and as one society founded by Christ manifest in the flesh—its principles and rules as God's, brought down to man's comprehension; and let it direct us further to consider the indivisible unity of this Church—that it is one, and we cannot make another; and then our respect for

Church order and discipline will be placed so high, that we shall esteem it an act of impiety to slight them, and of sacrilege to break them. To desert from Church-communion, will be felt to be a desertion of the body of Christ: to create or countenance a schism[1] in the Church, by setting ruler against ruler, and communion against communion, will be to rend his seamless garment;[2] and to establish a new line of pastors and a new society, will be, not the possession of a separate fragment of that garment (for though it may be grievously rent, it still remains indivisibly one), but it will be felt to be a setting ourselves in opposition to Christ, by whom it was declared, He that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.

4. Brotherly love.

Again, an acquaintance with Church principles is calculated further to lead us to a certain tone of feeling as regards our fellow-believers in the Church. Towards all mankind, as far as in us lies, we are directed by nature, and taught in the Gospel, to cultivate the affection of natural brotherhood; we are bound to the exercise of Christian charity towards all who, whether in error or according

[1] Note 7. [2] Note 8.

to knowledge, sincerely seek to obey the will of Christ: but especially does the covenant of the kingdom of God bind us by every holy tie with those who serve Him in his own institution. The full recollection of that covenant, and of our common reconciliation in Christ, would certainly make us unwilling that this trifle or that trifle should raise ill-will and bitterness of feeling between ourselves and our brother; and in things of importance as regards this life, things in which if differences occur, it is necessary that the wrong be resisted, it would make us ready and watchful to find an opportunity for peace, and willing to make concessions even to our own disadvantage. Much of this Christian feeling, it must be allowed, is found to exist as fostered only by the recollection of the similarity of our faith; how much more would it flourish, if grounded on the sense of our actual oneness:—on the knowledge that we are a society of the faithful, who have one baptism, and are partakers of one altar.

And not only towards our fellow-Churchmen as individuals, but as taken collectively also, these same principles will kindle the unity of concord and peace. We shall learn to be in

our respective countries an united Church; de siring, as far as it may be consistent with truth, all to speak the same thing, and that there be no division among us, but that we be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.[1] And as conducing to this end, we shall feel the importance of the precept, not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. It is well to thank God in solitude for the redemption of the world, the means of grace, and the hope of glory; but it is no less a bounden duty to do this together as bound in one covenant with God. It was ratified for all in the one blood-shedding of Christ; and it is meet that there be one heart and one voice in rendering to God the tribute of thanksgiving for spiritual benefits thence derived in common. There would be no indifference, no ready invention of excuse in regard to these duties, if there was fully felt the nature of our high calling, and the unity of our hopes and privileges.

Turning to the Church at large, the same Church principles and feelings will still find opportunity for action. In what country soever they may be—of whatever tribe and nation

[1] 1 Cor. i. 10.

upon earth they consist—wherever the Churches of Christ may be found—One is their founder and origin: there, if we know and consider our calling, we shall own our brethren in the Church. The difference of nature and blood is forgotten, when we keep in mind the union of brotherhood in Christ. On this principle, in St. Paul's epistles, we find different Churches sending their friendly salutations to each other.[1] Christian travellers in olden times were accustomed to receive a certificate of their profession and communion from their respective bishops or pastors, in order that they might be admitted into communion in the Churches of foreign parts. And we read that it was the custom of Cyprian to admonish those who were about to sail into other countries, wherever they were, to recognise the unity which subsists between different Churches, to remember the common stock from which all sprang, as the principle which should make them careful to cherish the unanimity and concord of the brethren among whom they might be thrown.[2] It must be deemed an evidence of forgetfulness of our essential oneness, that the Church does not now

[1] Rom. xvi. 16. 1 Cor. xvi. 19. [2] Cyp. Ep. 48.

present a like picture of mutual intercourse and unanimity and peace. With some foreign Churches, indeed (as for example those in dependence upon the Bishop of Rome,) among whom corruptions and erroneous additions to the pure faith have crept in, full inter-communion is of necessity suspended for the sake of preserving the true faith in its purity among ourselves. Yet we must never forget that we are still in the unity of the same Church together—still one family, though some members thereof are to be avoided as unfit and dangerous associates. We must still, therefore, think of them, and pray for them in the feeling of Church unity, and ardently desire that the time may arrive when the precepts of the Gospel being more faithfully and fully obeyed, it may be in the power of our Church, and of other Churches likewise, through their bishops and rulers, to testify that unity before the world in Christian communion with them, and mutual intercourse upon the principles of the pure Gospel of Christ.

Such would be the operations of a full and practical sense of our brotherhood in Christ. Teach the members of the Churches their bond of union, their mutual relationship—say, Sirs,

ye are brethren; and if they receive the admonition, it must lead them to act as brethren, and to live as brethren in peace and concord. The unity of the Church, indeed (as we have before seen), consists not in these things, but it is the source from which they spring; and when once that unity of the Church is known and considered by its members, these happy results will ere long follow. Knowing that in origin and family they are essentially one, they will learn to live together in the unity of love.

5. Zeal for the spread of the faith among the generation which succeeds us.

We will add but one more point to this extensive subject. True Church feeling will (lastly) show itself in the desire of extending and perpetuating the Church in the purity of its faith and the genuineness of its Apostolic order. For in the first place, there will be felt to be a solemn responsibility in behalf of those who rise to occupy our place and position when we are gone from the present life. For we shall be sensible that we are not the whole Church, that the present generation is but a passing wave of the stream of the redeemed, passing on towards the ocean of glory. We who now live are not the whole Church; there is part which has gone before us—there

is part to come after us. We are but a link in the chain; but as we are joined to Christ by the continuity of links which have preceded, so must we preserve the line unbroken, and ourselves connect the past with the whole series which may follow. The Church of Christ on earth is God's inheritance. We cannot exercise over it the right of absolute possession, for it is the gift of God to all mankind to the end of the world. Our part is but a life-interest, for it is entailed upon his future sons. We rob God and his sons of their inheritance, when we are guilty of any thing to the prejudice of the trust which passes through our hands—when we corrupt the faith, or hide its rays, or do any thing to weaken and undermine the pillar which is set to exhibit its light before the world. The Church may remind us of the torch-races of the ancient Greeks. The race does not end with us; we must pass on the torch with which we have been entrusted, to be carried forward by our successor.

Now, as these things are fully appreciated, so will be our sense of the responsibility laid upon us in behalf of those who shall succeed in our room. Each in his respective place, as bishop, priest, or deacon, as God-parent, or as

simply member of the flock, will earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and for the Church its witness. Her bishops will desire to commit the things which they have heard to faithful witnesses able to teach others also. Her other pastors will labour that nothing be lost or forgotten through their neglect of the good things which God has provided for his flock. We shall bring our infants to be baptized, and then train them up as God's children in the nurture and fear of the Lord; remembering that God has "established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known unto their children, that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born."[1] Let not those children rise up and accuse us of stopping the transmission of faith, of cutting off the channels of grace, of polluting the streams of heavenly wisdom. Let not the Church be less holy, her ministers less faithful, her people less Christian; let them rather increase in faith and holiness, and make the Church the joy of the whole earth.

[1] Psalm lxxviii. 5, 6.

Among heathens.

And secondly, there will be promoted by the same principles, the desire of extending the kingdom of Christ in the dark places of the earth. For the faith which we prize and venerate, and the communion in which we participate, these we see brought before our notice in a tangible energizing form. We see them concentrated, as it were, in a society, a real discernible body of men, affording definiteness and point to our exertions for the truth of God, and called together expressly for the purpose of making that truth to be known and seen by the world. It is described as a light placed on high—a city set on a hill, by which we learn that its true design is not carried out, unless it be exhibited before the world, and its claims and authority made known. Though it is ONE Society, it is nothing national, limiting its privileges to one people; nothing local, requiring its adherents to worship only at one place, and to undertake particular pilgrimages; nothing binding to precise uniformity of ceremonies, or confining its services to one language and idiom. Its principle of unity is in itself a principle of expansion. Its principle of unity is one which reminds us expressly of its power of growth and perpetuity

and universality. It is the unity of one root, and from that root may new shoots and suckers be ever sent forth, which are yet one with all the rest! The plant which our heavenly Father hath planted, is indeed an exotic here below, brought down from heaven itself; but it is not one whit more an exotic among the snows of the frozen region, than it is under the sun of the torrid zone. It is adapted for every soil, it will grow in every clime. Its very nature is to be catholic; its very existence at the present moment testifies to its power of successive reproduction and growth.

Thus the view of the Church of Christ suggests to us the duty, and also the very means of spreading the kingdom of the Redeemer throughout the world. And it gives us also the assurance of success. For by the Church, as the instrument, was the faith first planted among our own heathen ancestors. It was taught them not by books and documents and old records, but by the voice of the living teachers, who stood before them as commissioned ministers of Christ, inviting them to be baptized in the One Society, which was founded by Him by whom they were sent. And as the Church they planted here has been brought

down to us, so may we expect that their labour will not prove in vain, who in like manner plant the Christian Church as the witness of truth among other heathens. It is not sufficient merely to promulgate opinions and doctrines of religious truth, for these may soon evaporate or become corrupted with error; nor must we merely say, We have a very excellent institution for the preservation of the faith we teach, and for the carrying on of religious discipline; endeavour to copy it, establish one as like it as you can; or, we will establish one among you ourselves, which shall as closely resemble it as possible. No; we must rather extend to them Christ's institution, for we could have no assurance of perpetuity for any of our own; we must kindle their altar from ours, and light up their flame of grace from that which we have received. We must not merely water the barren land, but must open a channel and turn in the living stream flowing down from the rock, which is Christ. Then will they with us be in the unity of his Church together, alike part of his mystical body;[1] the partakers of his covenant, the heirs of his promises. For the Head of his Church, who as

[1] Note 9.

God blesses that which He established among us as man, will not withhold his life-giving Spirit. The commission which He gave to his Apostles has included them. He bad them teach and baptize all nations.[1] And hence we may be assured that he will gladly receive them among his sons.

If the features of character and disposition which we have now enumerated, are the natural results of knowing the meaning and truly considering the design of the Church, as the one society of believers founded by our Lord, it cannot be urged that this is a cold uninfluential doctrine, or otherwise unfit to be brought before the notice of Christians. It is no result of true Church feeling to suppose that we may rest contented as if our salvation were already secured, and as if we have nothing to do in that great work. Our inheritance is not yet in our actual possession, nor are we freed by the Gospel scheme from God's righteous judgment. Did not God, who guarded his people Israel and protected them as his own, show that he was a jealous God, and would punish them after the measure of their privileges? And if

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19.

He is forgotten among us whom He has called, shall not He visit us for these things—shall not his soul be avenged on such a nation as this? Thus God's covenant can afford no just ground for sinful indifference, or pride, or false security. On the contrary, we have seen how it must operate in producing a filial piety towards God, humility in estimating ourselves, a due subordination, and an unitedness of spirit, and temper, and judgment, and heart, and worship in the Church, and also a desire to make Zion a joy of the whole earth, to extend her borders until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.[1] And yet these holy results of Church feeling are but a few out of the many which might be enumerated. It is calculated to extend its influence over the whole life, to give a stimulus to the exercise of every duty, to brighten the whole of our religious hopes. It is calculated to raise the heart and affections to heaven, and to prepare us while here below for uniting in eternal fellowship with the Church above. That from the knowledge of what the Church of Christ really is, these practical benefits may

[1] Rev. xi. 15.

indeed be experienced by many members of the same, is the writer's sincere desire; and if in any, these good results be promoted and fostered by the reading of these pages, he considers that his end will have been gained, and his labour repaid.

CHAPTER III.

PRAYERS IN REFERENCE TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

I.—*In behalf of ourselves as members of the Church.*

THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER FOR PRESERVATION IN THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, we give Thee heartfelt thanks that Thou in thy mercy towards perishing sinners didst send thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ into this world, to take our nature upon Him, and to die for our sins: we give Thee thanks that *as man* upon earth, our blessed Lord did found a holy society of believers, to be a perpetual witness of the truth; and *as God*, hath promised to be with them and bless them to the end of the world: we give Thee thanks that Thou hast shown thy

great mercy towards us, by placing us in a Christian country, and a Christian family, where the glad news of thy salvation is known: and especially we give Thee thanks that Thou hast permitted us to be made even from our infancy members of thy family on earth, and partakers of thy gracious covenant.

And now, O Father, we pray Thee keep us thine for ever. May we never by our sins be cut off from the body of Christ, and lose our eternal inheritance! Cast us not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from us. Preserve us here on earth in the unity of thy Church, that hereafter in that same Church triumphant in heaven, we may praise Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God of our salvation, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

PRAYER FOR COMMUNION WITH GOD.

O Thou Head of thy Church, who hast united us to Thyself in one family on earth, and made us branches in the heavenly vine, give us grace to live in constant communion with Thee, receiving by the sacred union which Thou hast ordained, daily supply of grace and help in serving Thee. May we not be dead branches, graf-

ted indeed into the vine, yet deriving neither nourishment nor strength from the root, but living branches bearing fruit to thy glory. And especially may we enjoy this divine communion, when in the company of thy Church we feast at thy holy table; may our souls then be strengthened by Thy Body and Blood, as our bodies are by the bread and wine, and so cleanse us by thy Spirit, that we may evermore dwell in Thee and Thou in us. *Amen.*

PRAYER FOR COMMUNION WITH OUR BRETHREN IN THE CHURCH.

O Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord; Grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which thou hast prepared for those who unfeignedly love thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.[1] *Amen.*

[1] Collect for All Saints Day.

PRAYER FOR A CHARACTER AS BECOMES THE CHURCH.

O holy Lord God, we ask Thee in the name of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, make us thy redeemed to live as becometh thy children, and to be holy as Thou art holy. Help us by that Holy Spirit which Thou hast promised to thy children who ask Thee, to believe in Thee, and to fear Thee, and to love Thee with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength. And by the same Spirit enable us to do to all men what we would they should do to us, that beholding our good works they may glorify Thee. Especially as members of thy holy Church, may we live as becometh the Gospel of Christ. May we honour thy ministers, thy word, thy house, thy sacraments, and may we be all of one heart and one spirit together, remembering that where brethren dwell together in unity of love, there the Lord hath promised his blessing, and life for evermore. Hear us for Christ's sake, our only Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

II. *Prayers in behalf of the Church in general.*

FOR THE OUTWARD PROSPERITY AND SECURITY OF THE CHURCH.

Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness: through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*[1]

FOR INTERNAL PEACE AND CONCORD.

O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in from our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord: that as there is but one Body and one Spirit, and one Hope of our Calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may henceforth be all of one heart, and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of

[1] Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

truth and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty God, we beseech Thee graciously to behold this thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of sinful men, and to suffer death upon the cross. Kindle among all its members such a sense of their unity therein, that they may live together in love and Christian communion. Let not the Church in one country be at variance with the Church in another country: and more especially we pray, let not any Church be rent into separate communions; nor let those who have been received into thy Church desert its communion for a society of their own. Thy Church is one body; may there be no schism in that body! Hear us for the sake of the same Jesus Christ, who now liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

O Lord and Heavenly Father, we pray Thee in behalf of those who, while they profess to believe in thy Son Jesus Christ, yet, forgetful

of his holy institution, the Church, forsake its communion, and thus lose its benefits. Enlighten all such as in a zeal for godliness, but not according to knowledge, in the stead of the Society which Thou hast founded on earth, join those of human founding, and think in them to enjoy the spiritual blessings of thy Church. May they see their error and their danger, and do Thou, the good Shepherd of thy sheep, bring them again to thy pasture. And while they remain divided from us, may we never fail in Christian charity towards them: may no unholy feeling of bitterness, or ill-will towards them, take possession of our hearts: may we never seek to find needless fault, or to triumph over their failings, remembering our own errors and infirmities, and taking heed lest we cast a stumbling-block in the way of others, or fall ourselves. May we never cease to pray for them, that they with us may walk as brethren, and be one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory now and for ever. *Amen.*

FOR PURITY OF LIFE AND DOCTRINE.

Almighty God, who shewest to them that are in error the light of thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness; Grant unto all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's Religion, that they may avoid those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ.[1] *Amen.*

O Almighty God, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner-stone; Grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made an holy temple acceptable unto thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord.[2] *Amen.*

FOR BISHOPS, PRIESTS, AND DEACONS.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who hast purchased to Thyself an universal Church

[1] Third Sunday after Easter.
[2] Collect for St. Simon and St. Jude.

by the precious blood of thy dear Son; Give thy grace and heavenly benediction to those who are called to any holy function in the same. Teach them that they may teach others. May they be an example to believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity. May they earnestly give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine, not neglecting the gift that is in them, but watching for the souls committed to their care as those who must give an account. And may thy faithful people receive them as ambassadors for Christ, and be ready always to esteem them very highly for their works' sake; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR THE EXTENSION OF CHRIST'S CHURCH.

O merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he may be converted and live; Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites,

and be made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.[1] *Amen.*

When we pray in behalf of the Church of Christ, our own Branch of it may justly demand our especial attention. The various other Branches, however, throughout the whole world, must not be wholly overlooked. The following table is intended to bring before the mind some general idea of the extent of Christ's Holy Catholic Church militant here upon earth: where recent information could not be procured, the deficiency has been in some degree supplied from earlier sources.

[1] Collect for Good Friday.

THE PRINCIPAL CHURCHES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

"ECCLESIÆ UNIVERSÆ PER TOTUM MUNDUM NOBISCUM UNITATIS VINCULO COPULATÆ"—St. Cyp. Epist. iv. 9.

	Bishops.		Presbyters and Deacons.	Laity.	Authorities.
1. The Church of England ..	2 Archbps.	25 Bps.	14,600	16,000,000	English Clergy List.
Ireland	2 Archbps.	12 Bps.	1,964	.....	Irish Clergy List.
British India		3 Bps.	219	.....	Bp. Calcutta's Charge, 1842.
other British Dependencies		14 Bps.	.....	.....	
2. The Church of Scotland .	1 Primus.	5 Bps.	80	.....	Account by Scottish Episcopal Church Society.
3. The Church of the United States, (Protestant)	1 Primus.	22 Bps.	1,222	1,200,000	American Church Almanack, 1844.
4. The Church of Rome.					
States of the Church	1 Pope.	67 Bps.	.....	2,500,000	
Italy, Sicily, and Corsica .	39 Archbps.	265 Bps.	.....	19,500,000	Labbe's Geog. Episc. Brev.
Spain	8 Archbps.	47 Bps.	.....	13,500,000	Italia Sacra.
Portugal	2 Archbps.	13 Bps.	.....	3,700,000	
France	15 Archbps.	65 Bps.	35,934	30,000,000	Official Returns of Minister of Public Worship.
N. American Dependencies	.....		.....	.....	
S. American Dependencies	4 Archbps.	25 Bps.	.....	.....	Labbe's Geog. Episc. Brev.
5. The Church of Sweden ..	1 Archbp.	11 Bps.	3,500	3,000,000	Letter of Rev. G. W. Carlson to Hon. & Rev. A. P. Percival.

6. The Greek Church, or the Church of Constantinople.				
Pontus	1 Patr. 116 Metr. & Bps	.....	.....	Le Quien's Oriens Christianus. Th. Smith, de Gr. Eccl. hod. statu, 1697.
Asia Minor				
Thrace				
Syria	2 Patriarchs. 16 Bps	.....	.....	Dr. Robinson's Bib. Researches.
7. The Church of Russia	4 Metrops. 34 Bps.	190,000*	47,810,525	British Mag. Dec. 1832.
Missionary Settlements	1 Bp.	.....	.....	Mouravieff's His. by Blackmore.
8. The Church of the kingdom of Greece	10 Abps. 30 Bps.	.....	1,250,000	Evening Mail, Jan. 28, 1842.
9. The Church of Georgia	1 Abp.	.....	.....	Field, bk 3, of Church.
10. The Armenian Church	1 Cathol. 42 Abps. 150 Bps.	.....	.....	Jarvis' Report, 1838.
11. The Chaldean Church.				
Syro-Chaldean	1 Patr. 6 Bps.	.....	.....	Southgate's Tour. Ainsworth's Travels, vol. 2. Grant's Nestorians.
Mountain-Chaldean	1 Patr. 1 Met. 8 Bps.	.....	100,000	
12. The Syrian Church (called Jacobite.)	1 Patr. 21 Metrops. 65 Bps.	.....	.....	Le Quien's Oriens Christianus.
13. The Maronite Church	1 Patr. 5 Metrops. 13 Bps.	.....	115,000	Le Quien. Modern Traveller.
14. The Coptic Church	Patr. ..... 10 Bps?	.....	50,000	Field. Jarvis.
Abyssinian Church	1 Patr.	.....	.....	

*This number, however, includes Choristers, Churchwardens, &c.

NOTES.

Note I. *p.* 25.

The making the Church to be a mere abstraction may, perhaps, remind those acquainted with Church History of the error of the Docetæ, in respect to another article of the Creed. These heretics taught that our Saviour was only a phantom and not a real man.

Note II. *p.* 31.

The Church of Christ is called universal or catholic, as implying its extent as one whole, one every where. It is an error to imagine that the Church of Christ is an *universal* in the logical sense of the word. The Church of Christ is not a term which can be predicated of the particular Churches, nor may those things which are predicated of the Church of Christ, be, therefore, predicated of any particular Church; which might be done, if it were an "*universal.*" The Church of Christ is an individuum, and local Churches are not logically, but physically included in it.

It may appear almost unnecessary to have mentioned this, but it is introduced because there may occasionally

be met with ambiguity on this point, arising from this use of the word universal, even where it might be least expected. Thus, Bishop Taylor, to prove the important truth that there is no Catholic Church distinct from particular Churches, argues, that "every universal is but an intentional or notional being." (Of the Church, b. i. § 1. 3.)

So also Laud (against Fisher, § 38, sub fin.) on the same question, says, "The existence of the Church is only in her particulars. They alone supply existence to the universal," &c. Although his argument appears to establish the point in question, it must be remembered it would lead us also to conclude that there is no Catholic Church really existing, and to deny the unity of all particular Churches.

We may take this opportunity for noticing a not unfrequent misapplication of the word *catholic*, of a similar nature with the error just pointed out. It is used as nearly equivalent to *liberal*, or, as meaning *comprehending all parties, adapted for all parties*. In such sense we may hear of a "book written in a Catholic spirit," as being one which presents nothing repugnant to the peculiarities of even the most discordant sects: or, as being one which so far disparages truth, as to regard all diversities of religious faith sincerely professed, as equally acceptable to God. So also we hear used the expression, "the Catholic Church," meaning, that a certain genus to which the name of "Church" is (incorrectly) applied, is to be understood universally, as including all the individuals who by a process of generalization are found separately to belong to that genus. In the true meaning of the word, which is here wholly

overlooked, it implies the attribute of *unity*, denoting either the Church's essential oneness, or the oneness of communion, in which latter sense it is directly opposed to "schismatical."

Note III. *p.* 42.

Thus the Arians attempted to explain away the essential unity of the Father and the Son, as consisting only in ὁμόνοια. (Letter of the Council of Sardis, Theod. Eccl. Hist. ii. 6. sub fin.)

Note IV. *p.* 45.

In controversy with the Romanists, the question commonly argued is, Has the Pope right or just claim to be universal Bishop? A more important and practical question would be, Is subjection under an universal Bishop any principle of unity at all? It is more important, because, that it is a principle of unity is the assumption upon which the Pope's claim is grounded; and it is more practical, because, if that assumption be candidly laid aside by the Romanist, even though he may still deem us in error in rejecting the Pope's jurisdiction, he must at once recognise us as a Church, and so far as himself is concerned, renounce the sin of disowning Christ in any part of his mystical body.

Note V. *p.* 50.

St. Cyprian De Unit. Eccl. § 5. Ecclesia una est quæ in multitudinem latius incremento fœcunditatis extenditur quomodo solis multi radii, sed lumen unum, et rami arboris multi, sed robur unum tenaci radice fundatum, et cum de fonte uno rivi plurimi defluunt,

numerositas licet diffusa videatur exundantis copiæ largitate, unitas tamen servatur in origine . . . . [Ecclesia] ramos suos in universam terram copiâ ubertatis extendit, profluentes largiter rivos latius expandit, unum tamen caput est, et origo una, et una mater fœcunditatis successibus copiosa.—*Tertullian. de Præscrip. Hæret.* § 20. Et proinde ecclesias apud unamquamque civitatem condiderunt, a quibus traducem fidei et semina doctrinæ cæteræ exinde ecclesiæ mutuatæ sunt, et quotidie mutuantur ut ecclesiæ fiant. Ac per hoc et ipsæ apostolicæ deputabuntur ut soboles apostolicarum ecclesiarum. Omne genus ad originem suam censeatur necesse est. Itaque tot et tantæ ecclesiæ una est illa ab apostolis prima, ex quâ omnes.

NOTE VI. *p.* 59.

The word which is here (Acts vii. 38,) translated Church, denotes any assembly or convocation, as the English reader has it translated in Acts xix. 41. The full title of the Church of Christ, is ἐκκλησία κυριακὴ, "the Lord's convocation out of the world:" although it is also called simply by the name of ἐκκλησία, when no ambiguity occurs. In some languages the single name used is taken from one of these two words, in other languages from the other. Church or kirk is from κυριακὴ, and signifies "*the Lord's*." Eglise, ecclesia, is from ἐκκλησία, and signifies "a convocation out of the world."

NOTE VII. *p.* 126.

Schism means open separation in the Church of Christ—the rending of the Church by open separation between any of her members. It is of three

kinds:—1. *External or Foreign:* between distinct or independent Churches, as between foreign Churches in communion with Rome and the Churches of England, of Sweden, the Greek Church, &c. 2. *Internal or Domestic:* between the communion of the lawfully constituted local church, and an intruding or opposing faction possessing the constitution of a Church; as between the Church of Ireland and the Romish Church in the same country. 3. *Sectarian:* between the Church in general, and individual members, few or many, who by an overt act voluntarily separate themselves from Church-communion.—See pt. II. ch. i. The *guilt* of schism rests upon such as needlessly and wilfully cause or promote such separation.

Note VIII. *p.* 126.

Our Saviour's seamless garment is a favourite emblem among early Christian writers to denote the unity of the Church. (St. Cyprian De Unit. Eccl. § 7. Theod. Hist. Eccl. i. 3.)

Note IX. *p.* 136.

The Church is called Christ's Mystical Body, to distinguish it from his natural human body. It is incorrect to speak of Christ's Mystical Society: for although it is true that it is a society, and also that it is mystical in its character and design, yet as a society it is not mystical, but actual and discernible.

END.

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